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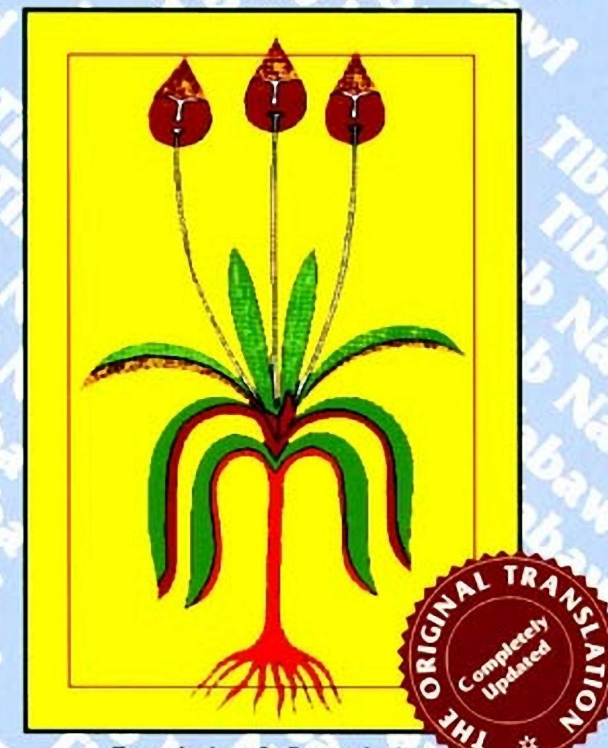
إبن قيم الجوزية

NATURAL HEALING WITH THE MEDICINE OF THE PROPHET

From The Book of The Provisions of The Hereafter by

Imam Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawziyya

(1292-1350 C.E.)



THE ORIGINAL TRANSLATION

Completely Updated

Translation & Emendation From The Original Arabic By

Shaykh Muhammad Al-Akili

Foreword by Dr. Husain F. Nagamia, M.D.

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MUHAMMAD AL-AKILI

Natural Healing
With The
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by
Imam Ibn Qayyim al-Ajwziyya

Translation and Emendation by
Muhammad Al-Akili

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TRANSLATOR'S NOTES

I take this opportunity to introduce this first translation of the extraordinary insight of Imam Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya's work *Zād al-Ma'ād* (Provisions of the Hereafter), and particularly, the section dealing with the prophetic medicine. This book comprises clusters of the prophetic traditions and guidance dealing with the science of the healing arts as applied by God's Messenger, upon whom be peace.

It took me approximately two years to study this subject, and I have entitled this book, the updating, and the emendation of the fourteenth century manuscript 'Natural Healing with The Medicine of The Prophet.' The emendation I have introduced to the original text are meager, and sometimes they are integrated in the original text for the purpose of bringing the fourteenth century style of writing closer to today's acceptable norms. The goal is to make the work easier to analyze by the reader, while trying to preserve the knowledge and analysis contained in the original.

Prophetic medicine and Islamic laws are invariably interlocked. In fact, when Muslims seek to understand the cause of an illness, whether it is an illness of the body or that of the heart, they solicit the answer from God's Book and from the guidance found in the prophetic traditions. Such is the case in health or sickness, because preservation of a sound state of the body and the heart is an essential part of worship.

The practice of the 'prophetic medicine' is sometimes interpreted in comparison with the medical discoveries of Greek, Persian, and Assyrian knowledge. However, based on the injunctions contained in the holy Qur'an and the prophetic sayings (*ḥadīth*) concerning personal hygiene, dietary habits, and other elements affecting the body and the heart, some Muslim jurists credit their interpretations solely to the divine revelation rather than to the discoveries of Hippocrate or Galen, among others. Hence, translations and interpretations by Muslim scholars of ancient medical works

gradually developed into an independent Islamic theory of medicine, based on the aspects of the divine revelation, and the prophetic guidance relating to the soul, the spirit, and the body.

Although Imam Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyya's work and interpretation of the prophetic medicine is complete by itself, however, the format presented herein is intended to benefit my own study of the subject, and to share the same with those thirsting to read about his valuable work.

With God's help, and in the process of translating this work, I also sought the assistance of an extensive bibliography and works on modern medical treatment, traditional medicine, homeopathy, and herbs.

This first translation into the English language and publishing of Imam Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya's work confirms Pearl Publishing House's commitment to its readers — a task that can only be accomplished with God's help and by His grace.

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I pray that this endeavor is pleasing to God Almighty, and I hope for it to be of spiritual as well as medicinal benefit to whoever is interested in this field — God is surely the guardian of success.

Muhammad Al-Akili

BIOGRAPHY OF IBN AL-QAYYIM AL-JAWZIYYA

1292-1350 C.E.
(God bless his soul)

He is Muhammad Ibn Abi Bakr, son of Ayyoub, son of Sa'ad al-Zar'i, al-Dimashqi, patronymed as Abu 'Abdullāh Shamsu-Deen, and known as Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyya. He was born in Damascus, Syria in 1292 C.E. (691 A.H.), and he studied under his father who was the local attendant (*qayyim*) of al-Jawziyya school. Later on, he pursued his quest for knowledge at the hands of renowned masters and scholars of his epoch, as well as he studied the works and teachings of sufi masters known in his time. His schooling centered around Islamic jurisprudence, theology, and the science of prophetic traditions. He finally joined the study circle of Imam Ibn Taimiyyah (1262-1329 C.E.), who kept him in his company as his closest student and disciple, who later on became his successor.

Ibn al-Qayyim was fervent in his devotion to his teacher, and he was an excellent student and disciple of the great Muslim scholar Imam Taqiyyu-Deen Ahmad Ibn Taimiyyah. He defended his religious opinions and approaches, and he compiled and edited most of his works, and taught the same.

Because of their perception and opinions, both the teacher and the student were unjustly persecuted, tortured, and humiliated in public by the local authorities then, and they were imprisoned in a single cell, while other disciples were kept separate in the central prison of Damascus, still known to-date as *al-Qal'a*. Among the imprisoned scholars, there also was a young man named Ibn Kathīr (1302-1375 C.E.), who later on became as the most renowned Muslim scholar and compiler of the most comprehensive Qur'anic commentaries *'Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr.'*

Upon the death of Imam Ibn Taimiyyah, the disciples were set free from prison, and Imam Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyya furthered his studies, and held study circles and classes for his own students. Ibn Jawziyya taught Islamic Jurisprudence at *al-Sadriyya* school,

in Damascus, before he held the position of the Imam of the Jawziyya school for a long period. Most of his writings were compilations, although he authored several books himself, and manuscripts with his own handwriting are preserved today in the central Library of Damascus.

In fact, it was considered an honor and a privilege to study in his circle. Among the renowned Muslim scholars who studied under him, we mention Ibn 'Abd al-Hādī (1305-1345 C.E.), and Ibn Rajab (1337-1396 C.E.), and others who oft-frequented his circles, and sought his company, such as Imam Ibn Kathīr.

Most scholars of the time have acknowledged the author's excellence, and profound knowledge of Qur'anic interpretation, commentaries on the prophetic traditions, and theology. His extensive knowledge and understanding of Qur'anic commentaries surpassed even some renowned theologians in Islamic history.

Ibn Kathīr spoke of him in his book *'Al-Bidāya wa-'Nihāya,* saying: "He was most friendly and kindhearted, he never envied anyone, he never caused harm to anyone, he never bore prejudice against anyone, and I was the closest to his heart. Furthermore, I do not know anyone who is more devout in his worship than him in our time." A similar opinion also was quoted by Ibn Hijr.

Ibn al-Qayyim catered to all the branches of Islamic science, and was particularly known and commended for his commentaries. Al-Hāfiz Ibn Rajab spoke of his teacher, saying: "He was an accomplished scholar of Islamic science, and no one could rival him in his deep understanding of the Qur'an and prophetic saying, and his interpretations were unique in accuracy."

Ibn Rajab narrated that his teacher Imam Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyya learned the science of prophetic sayings (*Hadīth*) from al-Shahāb al-Nābulsi, Qādhī Taqiyyu-Deen Sulaimān, and Fātima Bint Jawhar, among others. During his early student life, Imam Ibn al-Qayyim sought the company of most shaikhs of his period, and he was particularly proficient in interpreting the *Hanbali* Muslim school of thoughts.

His Spiritual Life

Imam Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyya was an avid and a resolute worshipper. He devoted long hours to his supererogatory nightly prayers, he was in a constant state of remembrance (*zikr*), and he was known for his extended prostrations. One could see on his face the clear expressions of piety, and constant solicitation of God's bounty and favors.

During Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyya's imprisonment in *al-Qal'a* prison in Damascus, he was constantly reading the Qur'an, and studying its meanings. Ibn Rajab noted that during that period of seclusion, he gained extensive spiritual success, as well as he developed a great analytical wisdom, knowledge, and understanding of the prophetic traditions.

Upon his release, he performed the pilgrimage to Mecca several times, and sometimes he stayed in Mecca for a prolonged period of devotion and circumambulation of the holy Ka'aba.

His Works

Al-Nu'mān al-Alūsī al-Baghdādī once said: "His interpretations are unique in accuracy." The renowned Muslim scholar al-Thahabi once said about him: "He gave great attention to details and references of the prophetic traditions." Furthermore, Shaikh Burhān al-Deen al-Zāri' spoke of him saying: "No one is as cognizant as Ibn al-Qayyim was in his time."

Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyya's contributions to the Islamic library are extensive, and they particularly deal with the Qur'anic commentaries, and understanding and analysis of the prophetic traditions (*fiqh-u Sunnah*).

He compiled a large number of studies besides his own books, including: 1- *Tahthīb Sunan Abi Dāwoud* (Emendation of Sunan Abi Dāwoud); 2- *Al-Kalām al-Tayyib wa-al-'Amal al-Sālih* (The Essence of Good Words and Deeds); 3- Commentaries on the book of Shaikh 'Abdullāh al-Ansāri: *Manāzil-u Sā'ireen* (Stations of the Seekers), which is considered the epitome of knowledge of sufi books; and, *Zād al-Ma'ād* (Provisions of the Hereafter), from which this book on the medicine of the prophet is extracted, besides other manuscripts copied with his own handwriting, and which are preserved in the Central Library in Damascus, Syria.

Shortly before his death, Ibn al-Qayyim saw his teacher Taqiyyu-Deen Ibn Taimiyyah in a dream and asked him about what Allah has reserved for him in the hereafter. Ibn Taimiyyah pointed for his student an exalted station that excels those of many renowned shaikhs, then added: "You had nearly reached our company, but for now, your station is equivalent to that of Ibn Khuzaimah."

Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyya died in the city of Damascus the year 1350 C.E., at the age of sixty-two, and was buried besides his father at *al-Sagheer* Cemetery there.

In the Name of Allah,
The Merciful, The Compassionate

﴾*In Thee we trust, to Thee we hold fast,
and to Thee is our final return*﴿
(Qur'an 60:4)

PREFACE

All praises are due to Allah, Lord, Cherisher, and Sustainer of the universe. I bear witness that there is no god except Him, that He is the sole sovereign Lord, and that He has no associate or partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and messenger.

The prophetic medicine that is presented in this book deals with both the spiritual and the physical aspects of one's health. In fact, the medicine of God's messenger ﷺ can only be understood in the light of the divine revelation, and the guidance of God's messenger, upon whom be peace.

The analytical studies and the scholarly interpretations of the prophetic sayings and traditions by Imam Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyya are unique. They confirm the wealth of his spiritual understanding, and his extensive knowledge of metaphysics, cosmology, and philosophy. Furthermore, they are the result of his in-depth knowledge of the Arabic language, the countless case-history and observations recorded by the author, along with the extensive knowledge of the community of Muslim jurists, physicians, and scientists known during the 14th century.

Ibn al-Qayyim's work also sheds light on a different school of thought. The survival of such successful method of treating illnesses for over fourteen hundred years proves that there are many valid systems of medical treatment.

1. THE EPOCH

The compiler of the original work, Imam Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyya (1292-1350 C.E.), God bless his soul, grew-up in Damascus, Syria in the fourteenth century at a time of great socio-political, economic, and religious turmoil. The period was also engendered by the introduction and influence of the Greek philosophy among other schools of thought. During that epoch, people's sincerity

and faith in God Almighty, their submission to His laws, and their trueness in following His blessed messenger ﷺ were put to serious trials. Recorded history provides that the movement of the revival of Islamic spirituality was originally led by Mawlãna Jalãlu-Deen al-Rümi (1207-1273 C.E.), the renowned Muslim scholar and mystic who lived in present-day Turkey.

The blessings of this epoch also included the fellowship of renowned shaikhs, Imams, and spiritual masters, many of whom lived in Damascus as well. Altogether, they played a major role in the movement of spiritual revival, and their works emerged to be an integral part of Muslims' perception. Such works flourished within few years of one another and remain to-date the cornerstone of Islamic references. Among the renowned masters of the epoch, we mention Imam Ibn Taimiyyah, Imam Ibn Kathïr, Al-H̲ãfiz Ibn Rajab, Ibn 'Abd al-Hãdi, and others.

These masters, among others, had one goal, and their struggle aimed to respond at the vigorous invasion of foreign philosophies and arts that flourished during that epoch, and their unreserved acceptance in the weak and unsuspecting minds of young Muslims then. The objective of these faithful learned shaikhs was also important to reestablish and confirm the foundation of the scholastic Islamic theology (*'ill al-kalãm*), the science of the witness's credibility and honor (*tazkiya*), and the application of discretion of a legal Islamic decision (*ih̲sãn*). In fact, these cardinal objectives played a major role in reconfirming the correct understanding of the divine message of Islam as portrayed and taught by God's messenger ﷺ. Hence, the works of these masters remain to-date a major source of interpreting the correct religious understanding (*fiqh*).

2. About The Book of The Provisions for The Hereafter

The original manuscript was entitled *Zãd al-Ma'ãd fi Hudã k̲h̲air al-'Idãd* (The Provisions of the Hereafter, As Guided by the Best of God's Creation).

The work was compiled by Imam Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyya, God bless his soul. The entire manuscript was first published in India in 1897 C.E., and then in Egypt in 1923 C.E., and the third publishing came out of Aleppo, Syria in 1927. I was able to obtain a copy of the original manuscript on microfilm from the Central Library of Damascus, the study of which also assisted me in completing this work.

The manuscript introduces the prophetic traditions in meticulously subtle details, together with referenced explanations and notes. It also relates to every aspect of the life of God's messenger, upon whom be peace, including, his traditions, words, deeds, and decisions. The book also reflects the extraordinary influence of the prophetic traditions, example, and guidance, and their spiritual, psychological, ethical, behavioral, socio-cultural, and economic role in Muslims' life, needless to mention their influence on other cultures as well.

The manuscript comprises the complete range of Imam Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya's works. It deals with the interpretation of the prophet's life (*Sīra*), the prophetic traditions (*Sunna*), and Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*), and in one of its chapter, it deals with the interpretation of medical advice given by God's messenger, upon whom be peace. In fact, the book is a synopsis of Islamic science in comparative prophetic studies, and is considered in the circles of Muslim scholars second to the famous Islamic reference book *iḫyā' 'uloum al-Deen* (The Revival of Religious Science) by Imam Abu Ḫamīd al-Ghazāli (d. 1111 C.E.), God bless his soul.

The Gnostic and pious Imam 'Abdullāh al-Ghaznawi said in his biography of Imam Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyya, that the latter used to regularly pray: "O Most Merciful and Compassionate Lord, help me complete this book, and make it the best of my deeds and provisions for the hereafter."[1]

3. The Essence of Knowledge, and Following The Prophetic Guidance

God Almighty says: ‹ Do what the messenger commands you to do, and abstain from what he forbids you to do› (*Qur'an 59:7*).

Imam Bukhāri (809-869 C.E.), God bless his soul, once said: "Knowledge must be acquired before words are spoken, and before actions are taken. This is because Almighty Allah has said: ‹ You must know that there is no god except Allah › (*Qur'an 47:19*)."

Hence, God Almighty commenced by instructing His messenger to recognize knowledge as the source of understanding and wisdom, and the vehicle of spiritual and material advancement. God's messenger, upon whom be peace, said: "The scholars are the heirs of the prophets."[2] This prophetic saying is also confirmed in the divine revelation: ‹ And We decreed that some of Our chosen servants inherit the Book › (*Qur'an 35:32*). Speaking of paradise as the

[1] *Nuzhat-ul Khawāṭir*, A. al-Ghaznawi; Afghanistan.
[2] Reported in Saḫīḫ Bukhāri.

ultimate reward of the believers, He said: ❮ Those who observe their regular prayers are the heirs ❯ (*Qur'an 23:10*), and He also said: ❮ Only the learned ones will understand it ❯ (*Qur'an 29:43*). God's messenger ﷺ said: "When God Almighty decrees to benefit a servant, He grants him the correct understanding. In fact, knowledge must be cultivated."

Ibn 'Abbāss, God be pleased with him, said: "Become godly, have forbearance, and be learned." Godly (Arb. *rabbaniyyūn* > n. *Rabb*, adj. *tarbiya*, i.e., upbringing, training) is also interpreted to mean that religious teachers must instruct the people with the basic knowledge before embarking on the more complex one. Hence, knowledge is the pillar of faith, the map of the road of seekers, and the foundation of the correct adherence to true worship.

I would like to conclude this preface with a translation of Imam Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyya's words, in his book, saying: "These are few words that maybe of interest to someone who strives with sincerity to acquire the essential knowledge about God's messenger, upon whom be peace, his life, traditions, and guidance."[1]

"One must make this quest his highest priority. That is to know God's messenger ﷺ and what was revealed to him from Almighty Allah. This is because there is no room for prosperity but at his hand, nor it is possible to discriminate between right and wrong, or good and evil save through his guidance. Should one become heedless of the straight path for even a blinking of an eye, his heart will surely go astray, and he will not feel it, or recognize such deviation unless he has a sound conscience. Hence, as long as prosperity is conditional upon adherence to the prophetic guidance, it is imperative for those seeking salvation to know and follow such guidance, emulate the prophet's example, and prescribe to his message to eschew the avenues of ignorance, to enter his intimate circle, and to drink from his sublime pond. In this field, there are three categories of people: (1) The procrastinator who seeks little; (2) the knowledge-thirsty who strives excessively; and (3) the deprived. However, God Almighty controls the distribution of His favors, and He allots His favors to whosoever He chooses, and as He pleases, for He is the Lord of abounding grace."[2]

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[1] Zād al-Ma'ād pp. 15/2.
[2] Zād al-Ma'ād pp. 15/1.

INTRODUCTION TO ISLAMIC MEDICINE

1. A BRIEF HISTORY

Knowledge of medicine flourished in the Islamic caliphate between the fall of the Roman Empire in the 5th century C.E., and the European Renaissance in the 15th century. However, the surge of Islamic medical institutions began during the 9th century C.E., and coincided with the golden age of the 'Abbasid Caliphate in the East (749-1258 C.E.).

This sea of knowledge which flowed for nearly four centuries was halted later on by the Mongolian invasion of the Eastern Caliphate and the eclipse of the Western Caliphate in Spain.

Traditional Islamic medicine is highly eclectic, and it was built upon the earlier medical knowledge, including, Indian, Persian, Roman, Greek, and Syrian. The initial phase of the development of Islamic medicine concentrated on the translation of Greek, Persian and Nestorian works into Arabic. This was known as *Madrasatu- Shurrāh al-Ighrïqiyeen* (The School of the Commentators of Greek Works) whose masters translated almost all of the Greek works on medicine and science. In fact, Muslims are credited with preserving much of the work of Galen and Hippocrate, among others, and Europe first knew about Greek medicine from Arabic translations.

Following the phase of rapid acquisition of Greek and Persian sciences, a new generation of Muslim scientists emerged with their own original concepts and contributions to medicine, and the work of such scholars as Avicenna, al-Rāzi, and others dominated the European medical schools for several centuries.

The 'Abbasid Caliph al-Ma'moun (d. 813 C.E.) took a giant step in the direction of establishing translation departments and medical colleges when he founded *Dār al-Hikma* (the hospice of medical treatment) in Baghdad. This major institution included a college for translation headed by the Muslim physician and philosopher Hunayn Ibn Ishāq al-'Ibādi (810-873 C.E.) who also

occupied the position of head of translators of the time, and incidentally, he was the son of a pharmacist from the city of Hïra in Iraq.

These medical colleges established the basis of medical practice at the time, and they contributed largely to the innovations in hospital designs, ambulatory patient care and mobile clinics.

Among these hospitals and colleges, the greatest and most renowned were *al-Nuri* hospital in Damascus (1160 C.E.), which remained active for nearly three centuries, and the *Mansüri* Hospital in Cairo, Egypt (1276 C.E.). At one time, Baghdad had about sixty hospitals, while Cordoba, in Spain, had more than fifty hospitals. The larger hospitals had libraries, outpatient clinics and medical schools. These hospitals were operated with the scrutiny of separating patients with fevers or contagious diseases as well as the mentally disturbed. Medical education was carried on in these hospitals. Students sought theoretical and practical training there, and renowned physicians and surgeons were selected to serve in these hospitals.

The Mansüri hospital was the first hospital to emphasize science, teaching, and social service. It had separate wards for women, children, and convalescents, wards dedicated to specific diseases, an extensive library, and outpatient clinics. In addition to that, there were smaller libraries and private collections each boasting no less than 100,000 books. These libraries contained medical references, besides other scientific works such as on astronomy, chemistry, geometry, philosophy, and more. At that time, the eastern and western capitals of the Islamic caliphate became the centers of civilization, and the medical institutions and research were sponsored by the state.

Muslim physicians stressed both clinical and basic medicine in their teaching. Medical students were required to be competent in basic sciences, and to have adequate knowledge of the works of the authorities in medicine such as Galen, Hippocrate, and al-Zahrawi among others. Medical knowledge was codified in writing so that clinical tests could be evaluated to a limited extent, and students were examined in the basic sciences. Only those who passed were allowed to take the clinical tests, and certification in medicine required adequate knowledge in both fields.

The 'Abbasid Caliph al-Muqtadir (d. 908 C.E.) designated an eminent physician, Sannan Ibn Thãbit (d. 976 C.E.) to examine all physicians and to license those who qualified to practice medicine. However, court physicians and renowned physicians were exempted.

Muslim scientists also refined and expanded pharmacology and chemistry. They described many new drugs such as senna, camphor, nutmeg, cloves, cubebs, etc. and they used new solvents for drugs such as rose water, orange water and tragacanth. They also used aldehydes, alcohol and other solvents as well as they perfected methods for testing for the purity of metals and chemicals. Their persistence in the search for a method to convert baser metals into gold resulted in the discovery of several chemicals such as mineral acids, antimony, bismuth, ammonia and compounds of mercury. Such Arabic words as alcohol (Arb. *kuhül*), syrup (Arb. *shurub*), and others are now widely used. Basic chemical processes including distillation, crystallization, and sublimation also were discovered. It is also known that Muslim physicians used cannabis sativa indica (Arb. *Qunnab Hindi; Hashïshat-ul Kaif*) and the variety of hyoscyamus (Arb. *banj*) as anesthetics, and there are suggestions that they were familiar with inhalation anesthesia. The work of al-Kindi on the method of prescriptions and the exact dosages of drugs is well known. He applied the law of geometrical progression in prescribing drugs. And finally, the fame of Muhammad Ibn A. al-Ash'ath of Mosul, Iraq in medicine and pharmacology drew students from far and near to hear his lectures.

2. Muslims' Contribution To Medicine

Among the great physicians in the Eastern caliphate under the 'Abbasid dynasty, lived al-Rhazes who distinguished smallpox from measles, and Avicenna, the 'Prince of Physicians,' who attempted the impossible when he tried to codify medicine while squaring its facts with the systems of Galen and Aristotle. However, his writings influenced European thought for centuries.

In the Western caliphate, and under the Umayyad dynasty, they knew the greatest clinician Avenzoar of Cordoba (d. 1162 C.E.). Avenzoar was one of the few physicians of the centuries prior to the European Renaissance with the courage to challenge the writings of Galen.

Several Muslim scholars unsheathed their pen to elucidate the guidance of God's messenger ﷺ on medicine. Among them, we mention here Hunayn Ibn Ishãq (L. Joannitus) 809-873 C.E., who wrote several treaties interpreting the prophetic guidance, and he is also known for his book on ophthalmology *al-'Ashr Maqãlãt fi al-'Ayn* (The Ten Treaties on The Eye).

We also mention here, Muhammad Ibn Zakariyya al-Rãzi (L. Rhazes) 865-925 C.E. whose masterpiece *al-Judari w-al Hasba*

(Smallpox and Measles) is considered the earliest of its kind. In it, he describes the ground for differential diagnosis between the two diseases. Al-Rãzi also wrote a book on children's diseases and is considered by many as the father of pediatrics. History also recorded the work of Abu al-Hasan al-Mukhtãr Ibn Butlãn (L. Elluchasen Elimithar) ca. 1065 C.E., *Tathkïr al-Kahhãlïn* (Notes for Ophthalmologists), which is the oldest Arabic manuscript on ophthalmology.

Then came 'Abd al-Malik A. Ibn Zuhr (L. Avenzoar 1091-1162 C.E.) who was the first to discuss feeling in bones and the itchmite (Arb. *su'ubat al-Jarab*, L. acarus scabici), who was also known for his work *al-Taysïr fi al-Mudãwãh w-al Tadbïr* (Simplification of Therapeutics and Diet). 'Ali Ibn al-'Abbãss (L. Haly Abbas) ca. 994 C.E., a prolific writer, was also renowned for his book *al-Kitãb al-Malaki*, also known as *Kãmil al-San'a al-Tibbiyyah* (The Royal Book, L. liber regius), a comprehensive treatment of science and practice of medicine in which he emphasized dietetics and materia medica, and where he contributed a rudimentary conception of the capillary circulation.

We also have to mention here the Muslim philosopher and commentator A. M. Ibn Rushd (L. Averoës) 1126-1198 C.E., whose major encyclopedic medical work *al-Kulliyãt fi al-Tibb* (Generalities in Medicine) recognized the function of the retina and the fact of immunity in cases of smallpox.

During the thirteenth century also lived 'Ali Ibn al-Nafïs, 1210-1288 C.E., who wrote *Sharh Tashrïh al-Qãnün* (Commentary on the Analysis of the Canon of Avicenna), and who became noted for advancing his description of the pulmonary circulation of the blood three centuries before the Portuguese Servetus, to whom this discovery was credited.

The thirteenth century also notes the most distinguished historian of medicine, M. Ibn Abi Usaybi'a, 1203-1270 C.E., for his masterpiece *'Uyün al-Anbã' fi Tabaqãt al-Atibbã'* (Sources of Information on the Classes of Physicians), which is an early collection of 400 biographies of Arab and Greek physicians.

Finally, this partial list of renowned Muslim physicians and their contribution to the healing arts cannot be complete except with citing some of the earlier works of the master-physician Abu 'Ali al-Husayn Ibn Sïna (L. Avicenna) 980-1037 C.E., who was quoted by most of the above scholars. Avicenna summed up the medical science of his days in an encyclopedic work entitled *al-Qãnün fi al-Tibb* (The Canon of Medicine). This book was translated

into Latin several times, and have influenced several generation of European medical students. Avicenna also wrote *Kitãb al-Shifã* (The Book of Healing), *al-Adwiya al-Qalbiyyah* (The remedies of the Heart), and *Kitãb al-Qülanj* (The Book of Colic), among others. Avicenna also was twice the vizier of Hamadhan, and he was imprisoned for four months because of his political opinions at the time. Doctor Krueger, M.D. wrote about Avicenna, saying: "His medical experience was transcendentally greater than that of Galen... (he) demonstrates a mind like Goethe's, and possessed a genius similar to that of Leonardo da Vinci" (C. Krueger, M.D. Springfield, Ill. Charles C. Thomas, 1963).

3. Traditional Medicine

Traditional Islamic medicine exists in varying levels of sophistication. Muslim scholars such as Avicenna defined medicine (Arb. *ṯibb*) as 'the art which is concerned with the preservation of good health, combating disease, and restoring health to the sick.'

The original forms of traditional medicine were established on the basis of set text, customs, manners, and researches. Traditional medicine used the theory of the four humors, i.e., black bile, blood, phlegm, and yellow bile. These humors or bodily fluids correspond respectively to the four basic elements, earth, fire, water, and air. Emotion and temperament were determined by the balance of humors, resulting in melancholic, sanguine, phlegmatic, and irascible, or choleric characters. In the humors theory of physiology, for instance, melancholy is produced by an excess of black bile.

These four humors are also combined with the primary attributes of dryness, heat, cold, and moisture. The balance and equilibrium of these humors defines the extent of one's health and illness. In Unani medicine, a branch of traditional Muslims' medicine, therapy, for example, uses the opposite medication, a 'hot' disease is treated with a 'cold' remedy, and excess 'moisture' is treated with 'dry' medications, etcetera. In this school of medicine, the works of Galen and Avicenna are accepted readily and in details, although practitioners (*ḫakïms*) have modified some of them, and innovations continue to be made in pharmacology. In India, Unani practitioners have also added homeopathy to their therapeutic offerings, because of the emphasis it places on decoctions of herbs.

Although modern medicine assumes that a drug has the same effects on the human body, or nearly so, yet traditional Islamic medicine treats each patient according to his or her unique humoral

blend, which balance cannot be found exactly the same in another individual.

Lastly, traditional Islamic medicine also concentrated on anatomy and physiology. Among the writings dating back to the 9th century, we find *al-Mukhtaṣar fi 'Ilm-i Tashrīḥ* (A brief manual of Anatomy), written by 'Abdul Majīd al-Baidãwi, and the famous 15th century text *Tashrīḥ al-Mansūri* (Mansür's Anatomy) by Mansür Muhammad Ibn Faqīh Ilyãs. The major departure from the Galenic anatomy and physiology came with the work of Ibn al-Nafīs, and his discovery of the lesser circulation of the blood.

4. Medicine of the Prophet

The medicine of the prophet ﷺ, also known as *al-Tibbu Nabawi* is based upon the Qur'anic revelation and the guidance of God's messenger, upon whom be peace. Interpretation of the vast collection of prophetic sayings (*Ḥadīth*)[1] by canonical scholars, as found in this book, have adopted a successful and distinct style. In fact, several Muslim canonists, philosophers, jurists, theologians, and historians, among others, have unsheathed their pen, and went to a great length to elucidate the prophetic guidance, and they were successful in integrating the Islamic medicine with the materia medica found in earlier medical systems. The famous lexicon of the Ottoman bibliographer Ḥajji Khalīfah, *Kashf al-Zunün* (The Removal of Doubts), compiled in 1658 C.E., is a good example of such class.

Among the renowned scholars cited in his lexicon, we also mention here the biographer of early sufism, Abu Na'īm al-Asfahãni, Abu 'Abdullãh al-Thahabi, the encyclopedist Jalãl al-Deen al-Suyūṭī, and many more, all of whom wrote books on the prophetic medicine under the title *al-Ṭibbu Nabawi*, or have at least incorporated such studies in their works.

5. Conclusion

Finally, as the reader is invited to indulge in this sea of knowledge, to discover the wealth, the analytical wisdom, and the concise interpretations of the prophetic sayings, as viewed by the 14th century Imam Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyya, God bless his soul, I take this opportunity to thank Almighty Allah, Who allowed this servant to recognize a glimpse of His magnificent

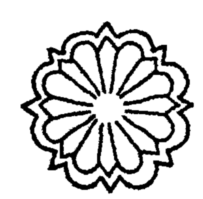
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[1] Cf. Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhãri; Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim; Sunan Ibn Mãja; Sunan al-Nisã'ī, and others.

signs (Ãyãt), and to contemplate for a single moment upon the beauty of His magnificent work.

Glory be to Allah, and may He shower His utmost blessings upon the best and the most perfect of His creation, who possessed the most balanced physical and psychological temperaments. May his family, companions, children, and followers be blessed forever. Amen.

This work was completed by
the grace of God Almighty,
this Thursday, the 6th day of Jamãd-ul Ãkhira, 1414 H.,
November 19th, 1993 C.E.
All praises be to Allah,
Lord and Cherisher
of the
universe.



A page from the original manuscript of *Zād al-Ma'ād*, section on the Medicine of The Prophet, catalogued in the Central Library of Damascus under the number 1898.

Part I
Traditional Medicine

NATURAL HEALING
WITH THE
MEDICINE OF THE PROPHET
At-Tibbu Nabawi
PART I
TRADITIONAL MEDICINE

We say, and Allah is the helper Who provides the means and controls the actions, that there are two types of illnesses stated in the holy Qur'an: 1. Illness of the hearts and, 2. Illness of the body. As for the illness of the heart, it comprises two types, the first is suspicion and doubt, and the second desire, allurement and sin. In that regard, Allah, the glorious and magnificent, says: ❮ Their hearts are sick, and Allah has caused their sickness to intensify ❯ (*Qur'an 2:10*). He also says: ❮ Those whose hearts are sick and the unbelievers say: What does God mean with this parable?❯ (*Qur'an 74:31*) He, the most magnificent then says concerning those who refuse to accept the criterion of the Qur'an and the prophetic traditions: ❮ When they are invited to Allah and to His Messenger to judge between them, a group of them will object, though if they were right, they would walk to him flagrantly. Are they sick at heart or do they have doubt, or do they fear that Allah and His Messenger will defraud them? Nay, but such are the unjust ones ❯ (*Qur'an 24:48*).

This is the sickness of doubt and suspicion. As for the sickness of desire, allurement and wantonness, this is the sin of adultery. Admonishing the believers, Allah, the magnificent and most exalted, addresses the wives of His Prophet ﷺ who had to serve and attend the needs of the ever growing number of people visiting and soliciting the advice of His Prophet ﷺ, saying: ❮ O ye consort of the Prophet, you are not like any other women if you heed with piety. Therefore, be not too complaisant of speech lest someone whose heart is sick should be moved with desire ❯ (*Qur'an 33:32*).

As for the illness of the body, Allah, the magnificent and most exalted, says: ❮ A blind person is not subject to blame, nor is the lame or the sick ❯ (*Qur'an 48:17*). He, the Almighty Lord, also mentions physical illness, the health advantages embodied in the pilgrimage, fasting, and the hygienic properties of taking ablution, besides other benefits, to illustrate the practical as well as spiritual

wealth that is hidden in the glorious Qur'an for those who read it, act upon it and fathom its mysteries. This will help one to satisfy his utmost needs by pursuing the divine guidance. Such guidance in physical wellness is better defined in pursuing three avenues including: preventive medicine, abstaining from what is harmful and cleansing the body and flushing out pernicious toxins. God Almighty mentions these three principles in the verse of 'fasting' saying: ❮ Fasting is prescribed for a fixed number of days; however, if any of you is ill or traveling, then the prescribed number of days should be made up on later days❯ (*Qur'an 2:184*). Thus, He otherwise permitted the sick to postpone his fast until he recovers from his illness, and for the traveler to temporarily delay the prescribed fast to preserve his strength, because of the strain and movement involved in travel. As for the verse of 'pilgrimage', He says: ❮ If any of you is ill or has an ailment in his scalp (necessitating shaving, he should) in compensation either fast, or feed the poor, or offer sacrifice ❯ (*Qur'an 2:196*). Here again, God Almighty gives permission for a sick person or someone suffering from a serious itch, dandruff or lice, for example, or from other scalp disease to compensate by shaving the head during the sacrament of *Iḫrãm*, which is otherwise not permitted, to eliminate harmful vapors that would congest over the scalp, hindering the breathing of the pores and perhaps causing infection of follicles. Once he shaves his head, the pores open and such vapors are emitted, allowing a natural cleansing process. Thus, in interpreting Qur'anic verses, and as one may understand from the divine explanations, they provide guidance in handling the lesser illness to help treat the more serious illness, and therefore, a deductive method called *qiyãs* is developed for purging harmful toxins and other congestions. This method deals with ten areas of the human body when excited, including: the blood when it boils, semen when it abounds, urine, feces, gas, vomit, sneeze, sleep, hunger and thirst. Each one of these ten elements causes an illness when congested and henceforth necessitates purgation.

As for the aspect of dietetic abstinence (*ḫimyah*), the divine guidance provided in the verse of 'ablution' says: ❮ If you are ill, or on a journey, or if one of you comes from offices of nature, or if you have been in contact with women and find no water for washing your whole body, then use a clean surface (sand or earth) and rub your faces and hands with it, for God blots out sins and forgives again and again❯ (*Qur'an 4:43*). In this case, God Almighty permitted a sick person to substitute *tayammum* for the regular ablution and avoid the use of water when its external use is harmful.

Again, this guidance indicates the need for abstinence to alleviate questionable health complications. In such a way, God Almighty instituted the basic principles of medicinal remedies and their constitutions.

In this study, we will also introduce the medical guidance which is instituted by God's messenger ﷺ, upon whom be peace, and surely there is no better way to apply such knowledge than through their guidance. As for the medicine of the hearts, it can only be acquired through God's prophets, upon all of whom be peace and blessings, and to correct one's heart and wash it from impurities one must recognize his Creator and Cherisher, His divine Names and attributes, observe His actions, contemplate His wisdom and adopt the criteria He instituted for His creation. Such hearts also must beseech His blessings by consenting to what He commands and loves, and by abstaining from what He forbids and abhors, and one's heart will know no trueness or experience true life otherwise. Such knowledge can only be learned from the teachings of His messengers, upon all of whom be peace, and thinking otherwise will be completely wrong and unfruitful. Therefore, should one think that he can do oppositely, it means that he merely fosters the health and strength of his animal mind, desire, lust, carnality and wantonness. His life will be meaningless and similar to that of animals, while a true heart of piety is free from such base associations. One who cannot discern the difference between these two types of hearts should cry for his losses, for a true heart is alive, and a heart that is blinded with carnality is dead, and a true heart is filled with light while a dead heart is submerged in the abyss of darkness.

God's Messenger ﷺ, indicated that there are two types of knowledge: (A) Knowledge of religion, and (B) knowledge of the body. The medicine for the illness of the body is also of two types: (1) one which, innate in both human and animal lives, necessitates no diagnosis of a physician to attend to it, such as hunger, thirst, cold and fatigue, and has its own natural remedies and antidotes; and (2) a second type of illness which does require diagnosis and treatment, and affects one's temperaments and humors, whereby heat, cold, dryness or moisture in the body exceed their natural balance, and the effects of combining any two of them exacerbates discomfort. Such effects produce one of two types of illness, that is, either somatical or collateral. Hence, for example, somatical illness manifests in the form of agitation of the blood or spillage of an element, while the collateral illness manifests as a result of such excess spillage and after the elimination of the original

causes. Thus, the illness-causing matters are expelled and the after effects remain to influence one's temperaments and humors.

A somatical disease carries its own stimulus that arouses further complications. Hence, if the disease carries its own stimulus, one must first diagnose the cause, then the effects, then find the medicine—that is recognizing the disease, then the illness, then prescribing the cure. Somatic diseases manifest in the form of physiological changes, such as a cavity in an organ, narrowing or expanding of ducts, organ deformation (enlarged heart or small stomach for example), rough or soft uterine-wall tissue, dislocated bones or displaced organs as well as other diseases. When organs correlate and operate harmoniously, they form a healthy body, while if they are abnormal, discordant or malfunctioning, they produce the synchronous effects of an illness, some of which are organic and others relate to bodily temperaments and humors.

Common diseases are the result of malfunction of the humors. This intemperament is called 'illness'. When its harm is felt, it manifests in eight areas: (1) four of them are compound, and (2) the other four are primary. The latter can either be cold, hot, moist or dry and they manifest at the site of the liver. The compound temperaments manifest as hot and moist, cold and moist, hot and dry, and cold and dry. This is caused with or without spillage of a component, and if the disease does not reach further complications and produces mere discomfort, it indicates an unhealthy balance of one's body.

Thus, the human body sustains: (1) three natural healthy conditions, (2) one abnormal condition, and (3) a mild condition. The natural healthy conditions demonstrate the standard functions and constitution of the human body, otherwise, one is sick, and the third condition known as mild identifies an in-between state that is consented to and is treated by the person as tolerable, without the need for a physician, by taking a simple pain reliever for example. Such an in-between state of "not healthy" and "not sick" can only linger in the same category, for negative does not become positive, but rather remains constant or invariable.

The cause of such body abnormality can either be internal or external. The internal causes manifest because of the four humors: (1) hot, (2) cold, (3) moist, and (4) dry, and as for the external causes, they manifest because of the nutrients one takes in, and those can either be agreeable or disagreeable to the body. Thus, the harm or illness that results thereafter produces such imbalance and discomfort, or could be the result of malfunction

of a specific organ, or a general malaise of the body, or even weakness of the spirits that bear the body. This general condition is caused by: (1) increase in passivity of what must be balanced when it does not compensate for losses; or (2) by decrease of needed adjustment of balancing factors of the humors when they do not compensate for saturation; or (3) by the hindering of agents that are supposed to facilitate the flow of balancing factors; or (4) by the linking of agents whose binding interferes with creating the correct balance; or (5) by the acceleration of what should be moderate; or (6) by the deformation of molecules; or (7) by the displacement of an organ. The experienced physician or *hakim* can identify such disorders and either eliminate the causes that infringed upon the proper constitution of a healthy body, or he maybe able to stabilize them and gradually, with the proper treatment, deal with the disease by using the correct antidote. Hence, the proper diet (*himyah*), moderating excess and abstinence prove to be the best cure as we shall see later in this study of guidance in natural healing with *T̲ibb* medicine of God's Prophet ﷺ.

2
Use of Natural Remedies

God's Messenger ﷺ said: "For every malady Allah created, He also created a cure." (*Narrated by al-Bukhāri*) Whatever remedies God's Messenger ﷺ used for his own needs, he recommended the same for whosoever suffered similar symptoms among his family members and companions. Natural medicines used by God's Messenger ﷺ and by his family and companions were simple and non-artificial remedies. Neither he nor any of his companions ever used any pharmaceutical (*aqrabāt̲h̲īn*) or composite medicaments. Most of their remedies were primary or simple and not compound. Though occasionally they may have used an additive nutrient to bring out pungency of a remedy, or a secondary herb to weaken the potency of a drug or to make it more malleable. Whenever food provided a simple answer, they subscribed to it. Such was the medicine of most Arabs, Turks, and desert bedouins.

God's Messenger ﷺ said: "The stomach is the house of every disease, and abstinence is the head of every remedy, so make this your custom." (*Narrated by Buk̲h̲āri*) Someone asked the physician of the Arabs, al-H̲ārith bin Kaladah (ca. 634): "What is the epitome of medicine?" He replied: "The imposition of abstinence from food." Such abstinence from food will cause the disease to

stand still and allow the body to expel it. Most physicians agree that eating the right nutritional meal is the best medicine for a healthy body. Physicians also agree that whenever a simple remedy can bring about recovery, compound drugs should be disregarded. Thus, when a malady can be treated with the proper meal or by diet or fasting, one should pursue that avenue instead of using drugs. A wise physician (*hakim*) should not be obsessed with giving compound drugs for every sickness, for this may create dependency. In fact, when an excess of a drug in the body cannot find a stimulant to interact with or to dissolve in, or if it becomes insoluble or cannot be flushed out of the body, it evolves into a toxin that will control the body and create dependency and further nutritional disorders. This principle applies for any nutritional excess.

Experienced physicians mostly treat simple diseases with simple remedies, and complex symptoms with compounded drugs. People who eat simple food rarely fall sick, and when they do, their remedy is simple, while city people who are accustomed to mixing food or eating elaborately prepared meals, when they fall sick, mostly need compounded drugs. It is reported by al-Bukhãri and Muslim that God's Messenger ﷺ never ate two types of food during the same meal. To promote a healthy diet and moderation, he ﷺ taught that one should accustom himself to eating moderately by apportioning to his stomach one third food, one third water, and one third air. He ﷺ mostly waited at least half an hour before drinking water after a meal.

Most drugs can be found in nature, and much of the knowledge of herbal medicine was acquired through experiment. This is known as empirical medicine. Some practitioners of herbal medicine also attribute much of their knowledge to observing wild life interacting with nature. They observed that animals use medicines by instinct. When struck by hunger, they seek food, and when thirsty, they seek water. For example, when cats happen to mistakenly eat a poisonous plant, which is not their common food, they seek any plant that yields edible oil and indulge in it to extract its oil until they nauseate and promote vomiting to nullify the toxic effects. Herbalists also observed that when serpents emerge from underground with poor vision, they seek the fennel plant and rub their eyes with its leaves. Hence, herbalists sometimes also have recommended the use of fennel for cases of weak sight. Similarly, if the young of a swallow becomes blind, the mother bird will bring it a plant called swallowwort, and will seek it even from as far as China. Again, when seabirds are constipated, they give

themselves an enema of seawater, beside other examples described in medical studies.

However, comparing the extent of scientific knowledge to the divine revelations (*wahi*) the Almighty Allah inspired to His Messenger ﷺ concerning what benefits him, or what may harm him, is like comparing the extent of the total of scientific discoveries to date to the infinite knowledge contained in the universes. In fact, the knowledge God's prophets, upon all of whom be peace, possessed and sometime imparted to their followers, cannot be fully fathomed or measured even by the most ingenious of physicians and scientists together with their most sophisticated instruments today.

Such mysterious knowledge pertaining to the hearts and their spiritual strength; their acceptance of the real medicine of their Lord; their reliance upon their sole Sustainer and Cherisher; their total dependence on His provision; their discarding of ulterior points of convergence; their willingness to break their attachments to the world and to humbly submit to the divine healing powers of their Creator and the Controller of every cause and effect; besides their charity, prayer, repentance, asking for forgiveness, good nature towards others, and helping the needy among other medicines — all these have been tried by many nations, regardless of their faith or religion, and they all have discovered unexplainable benefits that can only be attributed to Him, the Creator and Originator of everything. Thus, the minds of physicians, whether they are believers or atheists, have consented to the proof provided through their patients, as noted in their case history books, and who sometimes attributed the divine miracles to inexplicable phenomena. Such is the divine power of our Creator, and such is the proof that only He has control over everything, and only He has the power to cause illness and to bring about a cure.

Even today, a trained medical doctor may feel illiterate, and in comparison with the power of the Divine Healer, upon Whom the creation depends for its existence, such physician becomes like the village old woman who may prescribe chicken soup for a case of fever. Thus, in comparison, such observations also may make the medical healing arts and physical medicine appear like superstition, though their roots are still connected to the laws of divine wisdom and God's infinite knowledge concerning cause and effect. Hence, physical medicine is not foreign to the divinely revealed medicine. However, once the human heart is connected with its Creator, Cherisher and the Controller of everything, it

can receive effective remedies which are different from the so-called common ones. The human heart will also recognize that when the spirit (*rūḫ*) is strong, it becomes a powerful engine that will strengthen the heart, the brain and the body's natural defenses, and together they can expel and conquer disease, for they all are God's servants, and He alone do they worship and obey.

Thus, how can anyone doubt another who has acquired renewed physical and spiritual strength from his nearness to his Lord, and whose heart is revitalized through his love, peace and comfort in the nearness of its Originator, and whose aspirations and yearning to meet his Lord grow steadily, and who places his entire trust in Him and relies exclusively upon His guidance and inspiration—how can anyone doubt that such a devoted worshipper has indeed received the divine benevolence which is the best of remedies for all illnesses? Such divinely inspired strength will provide its recipient with resoluteness, forbearance, and patience to overcome adversity, to sustain extreme pain and suffering, and, eventually, to expel them from his body. Only an ignorant person and the most distant from his Lord, the most ignorant about the divine purpose behind the truth of humanity, the one bearing the mightiest of veils of separation from his Lord, and the one whose spirit is dense will deny such attainments.

In this work, God willing, we shall also mention the benefits contained in reciting verses from the divine revelations (Qur'an) and their spiritual powers in neutralizing even the lethal venom of a snakebite. Thus, there are two types of medicines, physical and spiritual, described by God's Messenger ﷺ, and we are narrating them in this book, and, by God's leave, to the best of our ability, we shall describe and explain them according to our limited level of knowledge, by drawing on His bounty, mercy and help to add to our testimony of His Greatness, Glory, and Oneness. ❮ He sends down the angels with the Spirit to those of His servants as He pleases, (bidding them to proclaim): Warn (people) that there is no god but I: so fear Me. ❯ (*Qur'an 16:2*) All praises are due to Allah, Lord and Cherisher of the universes.

3
THE PRINCIPLES OF HEALING

Muslim narrated in his *ṣaḫīḫ* that God's Messenger ﷺ, said: "Every disease has a cure. Knowing the right medicine will cure the disease by God's leave." In the chronicles (*Masnad*) of Imam

Ahmad, Usãma bin Sharïk reported that he was present when a group of Arabs came to God's Messenger ﷺ and asked: "O Messenger of God, should we use medicine?" He replied: "Indeed, O servants of God, use medicine. For every malady Allah created, He also created a cure except one. One who acquires such knowledge will benefit from it, and one who ignores it will forgo such benefits." The Arabs asked: "Which is the one that has no cure?" He replied: "Old age." Also in the chronicles of Imam Ahmad, it is related that Abi Khuzãma once asked God's Messenger ﷺ: "O Messenger of Allah! You see all these amulets (*ruqã*) we carry, prayers we recite, medicines we take, and other preventive routines we use for recovering from illness—do any of them obstruct God's decree?" God's Messenger ﷺ replied: "They are part of God's decree."

Such narrations of prophetic traditions (*aḫãdith*) acknowledge the science of cause and effect, and refute the opinions of those who deny them. God's Messenger's ﷺ statement attributing a cure for every disease is a general rule that encourages people to research and understand the medicinal properties needed to cure their illnesses. His saying even goes to the extent of encouraging research of the potency of remedies which if taken without physician's supervision may kill. Such constant research and trials also will demonstrate physicians' dependence on what God Almighty has created, and will expand physicians' horizons. In fact, only God can cure an illness, and people's knowledge is only limited to what He makes available to their level of understanding. This will explain the Prophet's comment "...Knowing the right medicine will cure the disease by God's leave." For everything Allah created, He also created its opposite, and for every disease He wrote, He also created a particular cure. The aforementioned "right medicine" also means the proper dosage, for should the medicine exceed its required potency, or if taken in larger quantities, it will produce additional health complications and, in other words, yield a new illness. However, when the medicine is deficient, or if the dosage is insufficient, the treatment will fail. Each medicine also has a shelf life, beyond which its curative components expire, and it yields no results. On the other hand, if the body rejects the remedy, or if the body is weak and unable to absorb and correctly dispense the remedy, or if the medicine encounters an antitype, it will cause it to be neutralized, and again it will fail to meet the needed criterion of the "right medicine" described in the saying of God's Messenger ﷺ. Otherwise, and under the correct circumstances, the "right medicine" will take effect by God's leave. This is the better of the two possibilities: (1) the general rule of

"Every illness has a cure," and (2) the "right medicine" which is the particular rule.

Another possible interpretation of the prophetic saying: "...For every malady Allah created, He also created a cure" is that when it appears that a drug does not effect the cure, then ridding the body of certain malignant elements provides the ultimate protection and cure. Take for example the destructive windstorm Allah commanded to strike at the people of the city of Sodom, and ❬...to destroy everything by decree of its Lord❭ (*Qur'an 46:25*) — that is, to obliterate anything subject to destruction by the command of its Sustainer. Other such stubborn diseases can be found in countless examples even within our close environment. Hence, if one contemplates the creation of opposites in this universe, their constant warfare, and the rule of ecological balance, he will certainly recognize God's divine omnipotence, His wisdom, perfection of His creation, and that He alone is the divine Sustainer, Sovereign, Conqueror, and Subduer of everything. One will also concede that for everything Allah has created, He also created its opposite that can certainly become a threat to its existence and continuity and vice-versa. Further examination of the subject will also demonstrate that Allah is self-subsisting (Al-Ghaniyyu), and that He is beyond any need, though the existence of the whole creation depends entirely on Him.

In urging people to 'use medicine', God's Messenger ﷺ did in no way encourage people to abandon trust and reliance (*tawakkul*) upon the Almighty Lord and Sustainer of the universes. In fact, his teachings clearly correspond to the customary practices of treating the common illnesses of hunger, thirst, heat and cold which must be met by their counterpart: food, water, coolness and warmth without neglecting to trust in God Almighty and to seek His divine guidance to provide them and to grant satisfaction from using them. In fact, one's faith in God's Oneness (*tawheed*) is not complete unless he understand the practical implications of cause and effect (*asbãb*) which Allah posted as cures; while neglecting to seek such understanding to treat common illnesses contradicts the common faith and practice of the basic religious code of the divine laws (*Sharĩ'a*).

Hence, neglecting such pursuit is like refuting the truth, and further generates languor and weakens one's heart and his faith and trust in God Almighty. On the other hand, satisfying such basic needs strengthens one's faith and trust in his Lord, and helps his material, spiritual and religious life. Otherwise, one

will be contradicting common sense and the prescribed religious code (*Sharī'a*), for the divine laws are the basic principle of human existence. One's weakness must not be confused with reliance (*tawakkul*), and reliance must not be confused with weakness. Hence, this will address those who foster dependence solely on the concept of faith healing, and who argue that: "Since recovery depends on the divine will and predestined measures (*qadar*), then medicine is of no consequence, and since illness takes place only by His decree, then nothing can obstruct one's destiny!" This is basically the question that was brought before God's Messenger ﷺ by the visiting Arabs. However, the more learned companions, God be pleased with all of them, knew Allah, and they had a better understanding of His divine wisdom and attributes. Hence, God's Messenger's answer to Abi Khuzãma put an end to such questions by saying that such amulets (*ruqã*), prayers and medicines "are part of God's decree." In fact, only a divine decree can abrogate a previous one, and the properties of the "right medicine" are a predestined divine decree that will cure a predestined illness. Of course, illness is the consequence of one's sins, and by creating the medicine, Allah manifested the divine mercy and compassion towards His creation in this world, and He thus provided a vehicle for repentance and gratitude.

If one sits back and depends solely on the hand of destiny to come and feed him, quench his thirst, cool his fever and warm-up his body, he will certainly die from hunger, thirst, fever and chill. Thus, illnesses must be met with their antitype, and viruses must be met with their cure, though the propeller, the propelled and the power behind them, all come from God Almighty. Hence, we say to the questioner who believes solely in reliance on faith healing: "If you apply the same principle in everything concerning your life and livelihood, you will produce nothing, bring yourself no benefits or ward off no harm, since you believe that what will happen will take place anyway, and should it not be destined, it will not take effect anyhow!" Such attitude will bring about social disorder and eventually destroy one's faith and bring his existence to contrition and remorse. Only an arrogant and obstinate person will pursue such contention as was shown in the argument of the polytheists when they said: ❮ Had God willed it otherwise, neither we nor our fathers would have worshiped anyone besides Him ❯ (*Qur'an 6:148*). They used this contention to argue against God's clear signs and message which was the proof of their guilt.

There is a third point we wish to bring forth herein: Allah has created and decreed a chain of consequential occurrences. If the first manifests, the second will occur, and if the third manifests, the fourth will occur and so forth. Hence, if you produce the cause, the effect will certainly occur, otherwise it will not. The questioner may further argue: "But if it were not my destiny, I would not have done it!" The answer is: "Will you accept this argument from your own child when he disobeys your command? If you do, then never blame one who disobeys you, or swindles your money, or casts slanderous insults against your family, or abuses your rights. Otherwise, if you do oppose them, then why would you not seek the better of God's decree and obey His commands, to wash away and purify yourself with His further decree of repentance from committing what He forbids?

It is narrated in the Israelite traditions that God's bosom friend Abraham, upon whom be peace, asked God Almighty: "My Lord, where does disease come from?" God replied: "From Me!" Abraham asked again: "Then where does the cure come from?" God replied: "Also from Me." "Then what about the physician?" Abraham further asked. God Almighty replied: "A man through whom I send the cure."

God's Messenger ﷺ, said: "Every disease has a cure." Though his saying ﷺ concurs with all of his explanations concerning the divine revelations on medicinal remedies, it also comforts the spirit of the patient and encourages his physician to seek and research the "right medicine." In fact, when the patient feels that there is a cure for his illness, his heart becomes attached to the spirit of hope, the heat of despair will cool, the gate of hope will open, and once his spirit regains its strength, the fever of his natural balancing defenses, also called innate heat, will be bolstered to revitalize his innate animal, psychological and natural spirits within him. Once his organs' systems are nourished, they become a positive force that will overcome and expel the disease. The same principle applies for the physician: once he recognizes that the illness of his patient has a cure, he too will seek to findit.

Thus, the illnesses of the body and those of the heart are alike. Here again, for every illness of the heart God Almighty created, He also created its cure— that is its opposite. When someone whose heart is sick recognizes his disease and counters it with its opposite, he will recover by God's leave. All praises are due to Allah, Lord, Cherisher and Sustainer of the universe.



4

Understanding Healthy Diet & The Practical Rules of Eating and Drinking

It is reported in the *Masnad* that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "The human being has never filled a container worse than his stomach. Hence, it will be sufficient for the son ofAdam to satisfy his hunger with few bites to strengthen his backbone. If he must eat his fill, then he should allow for one third food, one third water, and one third air."

There are two types of illnesses: (1) illness of the heart; and (2) physical illness which is the result of excess of a substance whose saturation harms the natural functions and balance of one's body, and this is the type of common illness that befall the majority of people. Such illness is usually caused by: (a) excess eating; (b) taking in food before complete digestion of a previous meal; (c) eating food that is deficient in nutrients; (d) eating food which is slow to digest; (e) or mixing opposing types of food or eating elaborately prepared dishes during the same meal. When the body becomes accustomed to such diet, it will also inherit various types of diseases. Some of them it can overcome more expeditiously than others. Hence, moderation is the path of good health, and the body benefits from a moderate and nutritious meal more than it does from a combination of food and supplements.

One's body can be accustomed to three levels of diet: (1) a necessary diet; (2) a sufficient diet; and (3) a supplementary diet. God's Messenger ﷺ told of the required "sufficient" diet, saying: "...few bites to strengthen his backbone," and such regime will preserve the body and will not allow it to debilitate or lose its

strength. If one is tempted to exceed that elementary level of health preservation, then he should "...allow for one third food, one third water, and one third air," and this is the best of common diets. In fact, when the stomach is saturated with food, it will not be able take in water, and when food and water exceed their recommended level, one may suffer from pulmonary difficulties, resulting in stress and exhaustion from the lungs' being unable to easily deliver oxygenated blood to the left atrium of the heart. One will also feel heaviness in his body, his heart and spirit will experience languor and drowsiness, and his limbs will fail to obey him performing his basic religious duties. Such state also will stimulate one's sexual desire. Hence, a filled stomach is damaging to one's body, heart and spirit. This case is more harmful when it becomes habit, though if one occasionally indulges himself in a delicious meal, it is rather healthy and comforting. It is reported in the traditions that Abu Huraira, God be pleased with him, drank milk to satiety from a bowl presented to him by God's Messenger ﷺ until he exclaimed: "I swear by Him Who sent you with the message of truth that I find no more place to drive it!" Traditions also report that occasionally other companions also ate to satiation, though, as we have mentioned earlier, excess food will cause the body languor and drowsiness even though it stimulates it. However, the body's health and strength comes from the nourishment it can absorb and not from the quantity it takes in, and since the human being is made from three elements: (1) earth, (2) water, and (3) air, God's Messenger ﷺ apportioned his diet into these three categories.

A Question On The Constitution of The Human Body, and Is Fire One of The Elements?

Is fire one of the elements of the constitution of the human body? Now, if someone inquires about the portion of fire which is not found in the portions allotted in the above prophetic saying, our response is that some physicians did indeed speak of fire being one of the elements, though other learned physicians and scientists refuted that theory and debated two arguments: (1) fire is produced from ether then descends to mix with water and earth, or (2) fire is generated by the other elements within one's own body. The first theory is absurd for two reasons: the first

is because fire is a light element, and therefore an ascending matter, and for it to descend implies the existence of a quasi element that acts as neutralizer and compels the fire into a descending characteristic, and that is unacceptable. On the other hand, in order for fire to descend to the earth, it has to cross through an extremely cold atmosphere (Arb. *zamharīr*), and we can easily notice in our immediate environment that even a huge fire can be put off with a small amount of liquid. Thus, for minute fire particles to cross through such an inescapable freezing atmosphere, they will certainly be extinguished.

As for the second theory of the fire being generated by the other elements of the human body, that argument is even more hollow and further from the truth, for a body that becomes fire after it was not must have come from either earth, water, or air, and must have been linked to one of them, while a body that is not fire when mixed with proper elements none of which characteristics is fire is not prone to turn into fire, because their is no fire in them. Furthermore, the elements earth, water and air to which fire is presumably connected are cold, hence, how can they produce fire? If the questioner further says: "What about the possible existence of a substance in the human body that quickens into fire upon mixing with the other elements ?" Our response regarding such possibility is similar to that of the first answer. Then if the questioner asks: "But we notice that when we sprinkle little water over a limestone, a red-hot glow-like fire issues from the action of heat of the limestone. Also, fire ignites if the sun's rays fall over a combustible substance through a magnifying glass; and again if we strike a metal rod against a hard stone, sparks of fire issues from them, and such fiery substance must exist within such elements!" In such case, our answer again is that this will contradict the questioner's first theory.

In refuting such theories, we do not deny the fact that fire can be produced from a heavy stroke of a metal rod against a hard stone, or from the heat of the sun's rays falling upon a combustible substance through a magnifying glass, or that the heating power of the sun can eventually start a fire, as we can find in other examples. Nevertheless, we have to discount such theories when it comes to the constitution and chemistry of animal bodies and those of plants, for both bodies do not induce the fire producing friction in question, and neither of them has the transparency or the smooth glass transmitting surface texture. In fact, when the surface of animal bodies and those of plants

are exposed to the sun's rays, no fire ignites; hence, how can it be said that the heat of the sun's waves reaches inside such bodies and ignites a fire?

Furthermore, most chemists and physicians agree that a fermented solution or an old and expired medicine is chemically valent or hot. If such heat is produced by fire, then how can such insignificant fiery particles remain ignited indefinitely in a liquid matter, when on the other hand, anyone can easily attest that a fire can be put out with water? Therefore, if the element of fire existed in the animal body or in that of plants, its characteristics would be dominated by the element water. Hence, if the element fire was part of the constitution of the human body, then the mixing of elements would produce a fusion that will alter its characteristics and turn it into those of water which is the opposite of fire.

On another plane of thought, God Almighty referred to the creation of the human being in several parts of the holy Qur'an. Sometimes He described such creation as being made from water and in other verses, He described the human creation as being made from earth, or as resulting from a combination of water and earth, namely a clay (*ṯīn*) that was placed in the open and left to dry like pottery (*fakhkhār*) because of its interaction with air and the heat of the sun. In fact, in none of the Qur'anic verses did God Almighty refer to the creation of man from fire, rather He ascribed the element fire to another specie of creation called *Jinn*. Among them is *Iblis*, the accursed Satan. It is narrated in *sahīh* Muslim that God's Messenger ﷺ, said: "The angels were created from light, *Iblis* was created from a smokeless fire, and Adam was created according to the description you were given." This prophetic saying (*hadith*), is clear and assertive concerning the elements from which Adam was created, and in none of the Qur'anic revelations did our Lord and Creator mention the mixing of fire in the constitution of Adam's body.

If such observers of the human body attribute heat the body generates in nature to a fiery substance, the cause of such heat can be attributed to a variety of causes, including body movement, food, or exposure to hot air, among other sound scientific explanations, and such heat does in no way imply the existence of the element of fire in the human body.

The advocates of the theory of the existence of the element fire in the human body also argue that when earth and water mix, they require heat to blend into a new composite (*i.e., clay*),

otherwise they are not compliant and cannot blend. They also noticed that when a seed is embedded in mud or mire, locked out from air or the sun's rays, such seed will ultimately spoil or rot; therefore, for a body to ferment, there must be a ripening agent or a heat generating element that must be fire. If no fermentation takes effect and if such element does not exist unbound, then it is lacking, and there must exist a homogeneous heating process that is generated by the elements earth and water themselves. Otherwise if such homogeneous heat further dissipates, then such elements are cold by nature and not by correlation and interaction with one another. Furthermore, they would argue that some medicines are hot by nature, and their heat proves the existence of fire in their substance. If the element of fire did not exist in the body, the body would have been cold, and without the interaction of an ancillary agent and its opposite, cold becomes constant and accelerates into freezing. In such case, the body will lack the sense of feeling, and in its absence, pain is not perceived, and in the absence of pain, emotions cannot be expressed; therefore, the element of fire, or a heating element, must form an integral part of the constitution of the human body.

Such advocates also argue that upon the mixing of elements, the element fire is tempered and hence does not retain its, otherwise known, external qualitative properties and characteristics, and therefore assumes significant isotopic transmutation. Others argue that when earth, water and air mix together, the heat waves of the sun, together with the influence of other planets, eases their amalgamation. When the newly compounded body is thoroughly amalgamated, it assumes new isotopic transmutation or a dissimilar chemical and biological formulation, whether a mineral, biological, or botanical body is involved. However, in responding to such hypothesis, we all agree that indeed the human body possesses a temperature which is created by a variety of factors other than fire, and majority of scientists today disagree with the theory of isotopic transmutation. We therefore conclude with the statement of the holy Qur'an, where God Almighty says: ❮ We have created them from a coarse clinging clay. ❯ (*Qur'an 37:11*) This verse proves that the primordial elements of creation remain unchanged. Indeed Allah is the provider of cognition and the guardian of success.

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5
Natural & Spiritual Medicine

Abu Huraira reported that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Treating an illness with what Allah has made lawful will cure it, and treating it with what Allah has forbidden will not cure it." God's Messenger ﷺ treated illnesses with three types of medicine: (1) natural medicine, (2) spiritual medicine, and (3) a combination of natural and spiritual medicine. We start in this chapter and in the following ones to describe the natural medicine which he used and prescribed to others, and we shall proceed to outline the spiritual medicine, then the combination of both medicines will follow. As for the last two types, and God willing, we shall attempt to merely outline them, for the eminent purpose and mission of God's Messenger ﷺ was to call people and to guide them to their Lord, and to invite them to seek His paradise. He also was sent to teach them about the Creator and Sustainer of the universes; to help them recognize their Lord; to teach them how to comply with what pleases Him, and to abstain from what displeases Him. As the seal of God's messengers and prophets, upon all of whom be peace, he also recited to people the divine revelations concerning the earlier prophets and messengers of God Almighty, their mission and plight with their people. Furthermore, he taught the believers, in addition to enlightening their perception with knowledge concerning the inception of the worlds: the creation of the human being; their primordial covenant with their Lord; and the Divine vow to bring the entire creation for a day of judgment. He also described the causes behind people's suffering, and the road to their cure and true happiness. Hence, the seal of God's Messenger ﷺ brought people a message from their Lord with clear signs for those who ponder and heed them and for those who do not.

The medicine of the body (*ṯibb-ul-abdān*) which God's Messenger ﷺ described, came to complement the laws of *Sharī'a* and to explain the remedies described in the holy Qur'an. The duty of God's Messenger ﷺ also was geared to furthering people's understanding of cause and effect, as well as explaining divine omnipotence and God's infinite knowledge of His creation. The natural medical knowledge God's Messenger ﷺ imparted to the believers was mostly intended for others to help increase their faith, to provide physical comfort and to cure their physical illnesses when needed. In fact, when it is possible to avoid the use of medicines by preserving a healthy body and mind through preventive medicine, one can

concentrate his efforts and concerns on treating and nourishing the needs of his heart and soul. This will help him prevent more ominous diseases from destroying the real purpose behind human life, for mere possession of a healthy body without concern for a healthy heart and soul is of no benefit compared to one's ultimate being and eternal comfort in the hereafter. In fact, the repercussion of such heedlessness may appear minimal and ephemeral today, though its consequences are more serious tomorrow. On the other hand, the benefits of properly curing one's heart and soul of impurities today bring about eternal comfort and joy in the hereafter, and indeed Allah is the guardian of success.

SECTION I
TYPES OF NATURAL MEDICINE

TREATING FEVER WITH COLD WATER

'Abdullãh bin Omar narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "The intensity of fever is a scorching torridity that is vented from the boiling of hell-fire, so cool it down with water." (*Reported in saḫĩḫ Bukhãri & Muslim*). In the past, this saying baffled the majority of inexperienced physicians and *ḫakĩms*, who were even able to convince some doubting canonists to regard it as an apocryphal tradition. Therefore, we shall, and by God's leave, explain the depth of this important prophetic saying which is a divine revelation (*waḫi*). Often revelations become controversial among adepts when misunderstood. However, pursuing modern medical practices, it is common among pediatricians to give an infant suffering from fever a bath of cold water until it subsides. We therefore testify, and Allah is our helper, that His Messenger ﷺ spoke the truth. This prophetic saying carries two meanings: one is general for all people, and the second is exclusive and pertains to some people only. The second interpretation particularly concerns people who live in an extremely hot climate such as the inhabitants of the Arabian peninsula, for example. In their case, it is common to suffer from ephemeral fever due to exposure to extreme heat, and this must be treated by drinking cold water or by bathing in it. However, exposure to extreme cold also can produce such ephemeral fever, and such case can be treated by drinking hot drinks or bathing in hot water. Here again we recognize the theory of opposites.

According to *Tibb* medicine, fever is a biologically unnatural temperature that originates in the heart and rises through stagnation

of certain blood hormones that are connected to the spirit or soul (described by Galen as *pneuma*); and by floating in a median course throughout the veins and arteries, such temperature expands across the entire body and rises to yield biological imbalance that affects the body's natural functions.

There are two types of fevers: (1) Ephemeral fever, which is caused by inflammation, excessive motion, or exposure to scorching summer heat or freezing winter cold besides other causes; and (2) traumatic fever, which is divided into three categories. Traumatic fever originates from the blood humor and it develops a temperature that spreads throughout the whole body: a) When temperature is related to the soul, it is called a one day fever (i.e., ephemeral), and it may last up to three days; b) when fever is related to the primary four humors, namely: bilious (yellow bile), atrabilious (black bile), phlegmatic, and sanguine, it is called putrefactive, and finally, when fever originates from a primary organ, it is called hectic, and the latter further divides into many types.

THE POSITIVE SIDES OF FEVER

Sometimes, both ephemeral fevers and traumatic fevers produce biological benefits no common cure can effect. In fact, some bacteria cause disease while other micro bacterial organisms and enzymes cause fermentation that helps to break down complex molecules in organic compounds. Such fermentation is necessary to form proteins in the body. A one-day fever and a putrefactive fever can thus help the body develop the needed bacteria and enzymes that will be difficult to mature otherwise. In fact, fever is often effective for thick humors, it helps in the treatment of paralysis, and it dissolves colic by expediting the opening of channels regular medicine cannot reach. Other advantages such fevers produce include benefits for patients suffering from ophthalmia and trachoma, clonic spasms and tonic spasms, among others. In certain cases, learned physicians and experienced *ḫakīms* consider the breaking of fever a good sign for recovery when the bacteria-causing fermentation is met with the 'right medicine'. Hence, fever sometimes provides the right climate for the medicine to be more effective, and for the disease to be readily expelled from one's body.

The prophetic saying: "...Cool it down with water," also may apply to a cure for ephemeral fevers through bathing the patient in cold water, or by giving him a drink of iced water, and the patient will require no further treatment. Such case represents an acute condition that will gradually subside and cool down through contact with such cold substance, and requires no biological

developments in the body. Galen recognized the benefits of using cold water to overcome ephemeral fevers in his comments: "When a fat young person with a healthy skin suffers from ephemeral fever caused by extremely hot weather with no obvious colic inflammation or infections, he can cool down his fever by bathing or swimming in cold water... In fact, we regularly endorse such practice for hot climates." The same sanctions were made by *hakim* al-Rãzi in treating fever when the patient is still physically strong, and under the same conditions described by Galen.

In his tradition (*hadith*), God's Messenger ﷺ also described fever as "...a scorching torridity from the boiling of hell-fire." This description perhaps has two meanings: (1) one is a biological necessity, whereby, God Almighty created and ordained its symptoms to manifest in the human body to offset causes and effects as required; and (2) the second meaning is allegorical and represent a thin slice which is vented from the venoms of hell-fire, so that God's dependents (*'ibãd*) may recognize it and consider heeding the Messenger's warnings. In that sense, the prophetic saying is intended to awaken human consciousness to the reality of the intensity of punishment in hell-fire. Hence, this discomfort will contrast with the gratification, comfort, pleasure and joy that are the prize of paradise. Such pleasant taste, God Almighty created and ordained its effects in the human life in this world to encourage His creation to contemplate the glad tidings brought by His Messenger ﷺ for those who believe, and He decreed their symptoms to manifest in the human body to offset necessary causes and effects as required. Hence, the Prophetic saying: "...cool it down with water," also means freeze its effects. The Arab poet al-Hamãssi once said:

When I feel the fire of love burning inside my heart
I solicit the company of good people to cool it.
Let us presume that I was successful
in outwardly cooling it with water,
Then, what will extinguish
the boiling vents of my internal blazes?

Just as God Almighty provided cold water to quench one's thirst, water in this world also will cool the boiling venoms of hell-fire. Anas, God be pleased with him, narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ, said: "If you feel feverish, take a shower with cold water for three nights at dawn." When God's Messenger ﷺ himself experienced rising of his body temperature, he used to ask for a bottle of cold water and pour it over his head, or he took ritual ablution (Arb. *ghusul*) with it.

Imam Ibn Mãja reported that Abu Huraira, God be pleased with him, narrated a tradition wherein fever was mentioned before God's Messenger ﷺ, and a man cursed it. God's Messenger ﷺ, replied: "Do not curse it, for it expels sin from one's body in the same manner fire cleanses the dross of iron." This is most true, since fever is followed by abstinence from food, fasting, subscribing to nutritious diet and taking in the "right medicine," all of which are a cure that helps in flushing out impurities from one's body and in calibrating body functions, balancing them, and purifying its substance. As for fever's role in washing one's heart from its filth and impurities, or curing certain heart and vascular diseases or tumors, this matter we leave to heart specialists to recognize, for certainly, God's Messenger ﷺ spoke the truth. Nevertheless when it comes to certain heart diseases that become hopeless, nothing can cure them. Still fever can indeed cure specific illnesses of the heart and body, and reviling it is certainly an act of ignorance and transgression.

Following the prophetic saying, the blessed companion Abu Huraira once said: "I love no illness better than fever, for it reaches each and every particle of my body, and therefore, Allah the Magnificent allots each one of them its share of blessings."

Once, during a feverish chill I suffered, I recalled the verses of a poet who said:

The blotter of sins visited me, then it bade me farewell,
Cursed be it as a visitor and as an egressor.
When it decided to leave me alone it said:
"What do you want?"
I replied: "Leave me for good, O transgressor!"

When I thought about this impiety in blaspheming what God's Messenger ﷺ forbade to curse, I said to myself: "It would have been better for the poet to say:"

The blotter of sins visited me for its own pleasure,
I welcome it as a visitor and as an egressor.
When it decided to leave me alone it said:
"What do you want?"
I replied: "Do not leave me alone,
O blotter of the sins of a transgressor!"

In fact, such attitude would have been more advantageous for him. As for me, my fever quickly dashed out.

In another prophetic tradition, although I am not sure of its correct canonical references, it is related that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Suffering one day of fever blots out the sins of one full

year." This prophetic tradition has two possible interpretations: (1) that the human body has three hundred and sixty joints, and suffering from one day's fever will blot out the sins of one day for each joint. (2) The second possible interpretation is that the effects of 'a one day fever' in one's body may last for one full year. This likely interpretation is arrived at by using the deductive method (Arb. *qiyās*), and from recalling the saying of God's Messenger ﷺ: "Drinking an intoxicant (*khamr*) will invalidate one's prayers for forty days, and they will not be accepted." This means that the chemical aftereffect of inebriation in one's body will enfeeble his central nervous system for at least forty days — God knows best.

Imam al-Tirmithi narrated in his compilation of prophetic sayings (*jāmi'*) a tradition reported by Rafī' bin Khadīj, that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Whosoever among you is struck with fever, which is a slice of hell-fire, let him extinguish it with cold water. Let him seek a river, stand in it facing the currents after dawn and before sunrise, and pray: 'In the name of Allah. Lord, restore the health of Thy servant, and confirm the truth which is spoken by Thy Messenger ﷺ.'

بِسْمِ اللهِ، اَللَّهُمَّ شَافِ عَبْدَكَ وَصَدِّقْ رَسُولَكَ

He must immerse himself in it thrice while repeating the same prayer, and do so for three consecutive mornings. If still needed, he may do so for five mornings, or even apply such remedy for a total of seven mornings, for such fever will not last beyond seven days by God's leave."

This practice is particularly healthy during summer's heat, and is exceptionally beneficial in hot climates, such as that of the Arabian peninsula, for example. Water at that hour is cooler because it remained shielded from the sun rays for an entire night. Also, at that early morning hour, one's body is more fit after resting, and because of the fresh air and quietude, at such opportune time, one's physical fitness together with the "right medicine," which is the cold water in this case, will counter the ephemeral fever, or even the Hectic fever when it is not accompanied by any swelling, internal inflammation, or other biologically hostile symptoms, and such fever will subside by God's leave.

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SECTION II
REGULATING BOWEL MOVEMENT

BENEFITS OF HONEY

It is narrated by Abi Sa'ïd al-Khidri in the traditions that a man came to God's Prophet ﷺ and reported that his brother was complaining of irregular bowel movement. God's Messenger ﷺ advised: "Make him drink honey." The man came back the next day and said: "I made him take honey and it did not help!" God's Messenger ﷺ gave the same advice for two or three times, and the man kept coming back with the same answer. After the third or the fourth time, God's Messenger ﷺ then said: "God spoke the truth, and your brother's belly lies." The same tradition also was reported in *sahïh* Muslim, wherein the man said: "My brother's belly is squeamish." Meaning that he is nauseous, feels queasy, and that his digestive system is upset." (*Reported in sahïh Bukhãri*)

Honey is an abluent and an aperient. It contains detergent and tonic properties that cleanse the arteries and bowels of impurities. It opens obstructions of the liver, kidney, and bladder. It is also a general preservative, and it helps to preserve the potency of salves among other natural medicinal remedies. Honey also helps to break up excess moisture in the bowels, such as in diarrhea. Honey is superior to sugar in many respects, and it is less sweet but stronger, and if taken excessively, it can be harmful to the bile, unless it is mixed with vinegar. Honey is good for the aged, it is a cough suppressant, and is used in Tibb medicine to treat corrupted phlegm in the stomach and to soften the general constitution of the body. Honey is also a curative for a depraved appetite, and when taken as a drink mixed with hot water and a pomace made from sweet roses, it helps the treatment of rabies, and is considered a safeguard against further infections. Honey is also used as detoxicant for drug users, and as an antitoxin to treat accidental eating of poisonous plants of the night shade family (*Hyoscyamus niger*), or wild fungus, among others. When taken as a drink mixed with hot water only, it helps as a remedy for dog bites. As a preservative, honey can be used to preserve meat for up to three months, and is used in pickling cucumber, squash, eggplant, and various kinds of fruits for up to six months. Known as "the trustworthy preservative", honey was also used as a principle ingredient in embalming the dead.

Spreading natural raw honey over one's hair as ointment will cure head lice and other parasites. It also can be used as

hair softener, conditioner, and it promotes hair growth. Using it as an eye salve, honey brightens one's vision, while brushing one's teeth with honey whitens them, and when used as mouthwash, it strengthens the gums and eliminates gum diseases. Honey's natural properties also make it an excellent replenisher and a solvent; it opens the pores of blood vessels and eases menstrual discharge, forces out *phlegm*, and opens obstruction of the liver, kidney and bladder. Honey indeed has great nutritional value and is the drink of drinks, a sweetener of sweeteners, an ointment of ointments, and there is no other food among what God Almighty has created for us that equals honey in value, and nothing is close to its constitution.

People knew honey from ancient times and long before they began to process refined sugar. In fact, ancient physicians spoke extensively of honey, and sugar was never mentioned in their writings. As a high-metabolic food, potent and a stimulant, sugar is not fully soluble, and it produces an attenuated heating energy in the body that also subsides rapidly. Such rapidly mounting energy leaves the body with the hard work of eliminating the balance of insoluble molecules, and of rebuilding the interior walls of the arteries affected by the abrasion caused by the passage of such molecules in the blood stream. However, sugar is more relaxing for the stomach, and is less sweet than honey and less vehement.

God's Messenger ﷺ used to sometimes drink an infusion of water sweetened with honey on an empty stomach, and such a custom holds ample benefits and subtle secrets, and God willing, we shall discuss them later in this study on natural healing with *Tibb* medicine. Ibn Māja noted a prophetic saying narrated by Abi Ḥuraira, God be pleased with him, that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Whosoever eats honey (at least) three times per month will meet with no great affliction."

In another tradition, God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Make use of the two remedies: honey and the Qur'an." In this saying, he ﷺ linked human medicine and divine medicine; remedies for the body and those of the soul; the natural factor and the spiritual one; and, the earthly medicine and the heavenly one. Once this is understood, we go back to the case history we mentioned earlier, of the man who inquired about a cure for his brother's bowel problems, and the remedy prescribed by God's Messenger ﷺ. In this particular case, the cause of the brother's constipation and suffering was due to excess food consumption and excess appetite

that produced a dyspeptic condition or acute indigestion. God's Messenger ﷺ asked him to give his brother a drink of honey to soften his stomach. Such a hot drink will help the bowels to loosen and aid the excretion of waste. As this constipation was caused by overeating for an extended period of time, his stomach lining was coated with a mucus or a sebiferous substance that caused slackness of the stomach tissues and obstructed the secretion of nutrients, for the stomach has a velvet-like lining with short, dense, and upright hair, just like those of a towel. When such viscous substance clings to the lining, it obstructs the normal cycle of digestion and spoils the food. Thus, taking in a natural abluent and an aperient such as honey is the best of remedies, and particularly when mixed with warm water. The medicinal purpose behind repeating the treatment has an important therapeutic value, whereby the "right medicine" must have the correct quantity and concentration to be effective. When the medicine falls short of satisfying such conditions, it will fail, and when it exceeds the required potency, it will weaken the body and cause other harm. Hence, when God's Messenger ﷺ prescribed a second and then a third application of the treatment, he implied that the condition was acute and needed further treatment, and eventually the condition passed. When God's Messenger ﷺ said to the man: "God spoke the truth, and your brother's belly lies," he reiterated his position that honey was the "right medicine" for his brother's condition, and that his "stomach-mind" kept on denying it until the medicine eventually took effect.

In fact, the medicine of God's Messenger ﷺ is most credible and candid, and it is based on the divine inspiration (*wahi*), the prophetic focus (*Mishkãtu-Nubuwwa*), and a brilliant reasoning (*'aql*), while most doctors' diagnoses are based on intuition, conjecture, and experiment, and they cannot refute the proven effectiveness of the prophetic medicine. However, in general, one who accepts it, believes in its healing nature, adheres to it with faith, and voluntarily and happily submits to its curing effects, will recover from his illness by God's leave. The same principle guides the believers when God Almighty says of the holy Qur'an: ❮ A cure for the diseases of the hearts. ❯ (*Qur'an 10:57*) Thus, when its admonition is not received with that kind of faith, it will not cure such diseases. Rather, it will increase the profanity of the impious ones, broaden the hypocrisy of the ostentatious ones, and compound their illnesses—even if they make use of the prescribed prophetic medicine, for unfailingly, the prophetic medicine will agree most with the obedient body of a true worshiper who is

blessed with faith; and similarly, the medicine of the holy Qur'an will cure the illness of blessed souls and living hearts. Hence, those who take exception to the prophetic medicine will not benefit from it, just as those who argue against the remedies of the holy Qur'an cannot benefit from them. This is no fault of the medicine, but rather their spiritless character, their defilement of the sacred abode of the heart, and contempt against God's Message.

God Almighty says in the holy Qur'an: ❨ From its belly comes forth a drink of varying colors, wherein is a cure for people. Surely there is a sign for those who would give thought. ❩ (*Qur'an 16:69*) Surely, God is the guardian of success, and He is the All-Knowing Lord.

SECTION III
TREATMENT OF PLAGUE

It is reported in the sihãh (singl. sahïh) that Usãma bin Zaid heard God's Messenger ﷺ say: "Plague (*tã'oun*) is a calamity sent down as divine punishment upon a tribe from Bani Israel and those who were before you. If you hear of a plague in a land, do not enter it, and if it occurs in a land while you are there, do not flee from it."

Plague is an epidemic disease that is deadly and especially the bubonic plague. In medicine, bubonic plague is a fatal inflammation that is accompanied by accelerated exudation and pestilence which are extremely painful and practically unbearable. Such inflammation mostly turns black and makes the surrounded areas green, and tenesmus becomes extremely painful. Plague mostly occurs in three locations: (1) in the armpit, (2) behind the ear, (3) the ear lobe, and in lumpy masses of flesh or such soft tissues.. 'Aisha, God be pleased with her, once asked God's Messenger ﷺ: "What is plague?" He replied: "A swollen gland like that of a camel, and it comes out in the groin and the armpit." According to physicians (*hakïms*), when such epidemic occurs in lumpy flesh, behind the ear or the ear lobe and produces putrescent pestilence, it is called plague. Sometimes plague and pestilence are considered to be the same disease. Such disease is caused by putrefaction of blood, producing foul-smelling pestilence and sometimes mixed with sanguineous pus. When the infected blood reaches the heart, it causes rapid heart palpitation, queasiness and vomiting that becomes fatal, and particularly the type that forms lobular glands. Mostly, the body rejects such glands, and the only parts that accept

them are the weak parts as we earlier mentioned. Though the name plague encompasses all types of such inflammations including *pneumonic* plague, nevertheless, the worst types are the ones we stated. The less dangerous of such plagues are the red, then the yellow, while the black increases the pestilence and remains the most lethal. This epidemic disease is called thus because it originates in lands which suffer from poisonous air contamination or pollution, and when the putrefaction occurs in the air, the humor will putrefy, and the disease will spread through most people. Plague is one of such epidemic diseases referred to by God's Messenger ﷺ as follows: "From contact comes destruction." It is noteworthy here to state that not every plague is an epidemic, and not every epidemic is plague, though many common diseases spread from contact, and plague is one of them.

As we earlier explained, among other signs, a plague manifests in the form of putrescent pestilence, sanguineous pus and infections that surface in the abovementioned areas of the human body. Such signs become visible as a result of the plague and are not the disease itself. Thus, a plague (*ṯã'oun*) can be described in three ways: (1) the external signs of the disease and the difficulty of containing them; (2) the spread of the epidemic and inevitable death; and (3) the cause of the disease, or the virus itself.

When such calamity befall the people, God Almighty causes certain adverse spirits (*L. pneuma; Arb. arwãẖ*) to spread and affect the human body through a spontaneous putrefaction and pollution of the air that will corrupt the humors, resulting in change of normal temperature, failure of weak and infected cells, and followed by disfigurement. During such calamity, changes take effect mostly when the blood and the black bile are agitated, or during an interval of sexual agitation, or during the spermatocyte of semen. At such opportune times, and when any of the above conditions manifest, negative spirits are more prevalent and can influence such conditions to steer through the body and dominate one's state in a way that is not possible otherwise. This is unless such evil spirits are countered by strong factors such as correct prayers, supplications, devotion, nearness to one's Lord, charity, and reading the Qur'an, which factors promote positive spiritual environment and bring about the presence of pure spiritual forces that are more commanding by God's leave.

In fact, we have tried, and many people have tried the practice of stimulating such positive spiritual environment by invoking God's blessings, and by promoting the continuous presence of

such peaceful and positive spirits or angelic souls (*arwãh malakiyya*). We also have experienced, countless times, the healthy spiritual effects of their nearness, and their role in repelling putrefacted elements. However, such positive spiritual surrounding or mood must exist prior to the adverse conditions taking effect. Whosoever is blessed and guided by God's leave will persevere in maintaining a continuous state of remembrance (*zikr*) to receive the protection of such impenetrable shield. On the other hand, once the awareness of a believer becomes keen, he will be able to perceive the intention of trespassing by evil spirits, and immediately counter it by invoking Allah's protection. This is called piety (*taqwa*), and this is the best of medicines. However, in His infinite wisdom, when Allah intends to fulfill His decree, He will conceal such awareness from His servant, the servant will fail to recognize or perceive the intention of the intruding evil spirits, and it will be too late when he discovers their invasion of his privacy. God willing, we shall further expound on this subject when we will, later in this book, discuss the superiority of spiritual medicine and the use of prayers, amulets (*ruqã*), spiritual sanctuaries and the health benefits of performing good deeds. Such practice will always remain superior and more potent, and the medical healing knowledge in comparison to the unfathomable spiritual healing power will seem immature and similar to the practice of the village old woman who may prescribe chicken soup for a case of feverish chill. It is to be noted herein that among God's creation, the human spirit is the most sensitive to its surrounding environment, and that the power of spiritual practices is far more effective than what medicine produces in the human body. Hence, with such potent medicine (*tibb*), the spiritual remedy can neutralize otherwise lethal substances.

The spontaneous infection of molecules in the air is only one of the factors of the main cause and effect that are produced by a plague. Such change of substance in the air affects the humors and brings about the spread of the disease, resulting in corruption in the molecules of the human body and developing putrefaction, extremely virulent cells, and producing foul smell from various malignant abnormalities. One also may notice that a plague is more infectious at the end of summer and during autumn because of excess bile waste and sometimes the inability of the body to dissolve it. Such waste will putrefy and become infectious particularly when met with receptive conditions, such as in the case of a fat person who exercises little and gives little attention to maintaining a good diet, under which conditions he will always be a susceptible candidate to illness.

Springtime is the healthiest of seasons. It is related in the prophetic traditions that "when grass (*najm*) grows, afflictions are lifted." The word *najm* here also may be interpreted to mean the spring season or it could mean the star *Alcyone* (the brightest star in the constellation *Taurus*). On this subject, al-Tamīmi emphasized in his book on healing (*al-Shifã*) that the incline of *Alcyone* at sunrise or its rising before sunrise has great influence on air pollution and subsequent effects on humors. Abu Muhammad bin Qutaiba noted that "before and after *Alcyone* dawns, an illness befall people and cattle, though its afflictions at rising are weaker than during its setting." Note here that the rising and setting of the star *Alcyone* announces the end of winter and the beginning of springtime. One further note on this subject: it is related that God's Messenger ﷺ forbade the buying and selling of fruits before they ripen to insure their wholesomeness and in order to control the possible spread of diseases.

It is narrated in the traditions that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "If you hear of a plague in a land, do not go there, but if it occurs in a land where you are, do not flee from it." (*Bukhãri and Muslim*) This prophetic prohibition against approaching a plague-stricken land is the best prevention. Otherwise, one will be exposed to breathing infected air and will avail himself to its infliction at the height of its vigor, and that is against the religious code, and by remaining distant from it, such precaution is protection for his life. This prohibition of entering contaminated land also will lessen the calamity, and it also represents guidance against entering abominable places or mixing with people who engage in wrongdoing, for their sickness is destructive as well. As for the second aspect of the prophetic *hadith*: "do not flee from it," has two possible meanings: (1) to contain the disease through a quarantine, to impel the minds of people (*nafs*) and teach them to place their trust in God Almighty, to exercise patience towards His decree, and to learn how to find satisfaction and contentment therein and accept His judgment; and (2) according to medical opinions, the best preventive medicine for someone who resides in a plague-stricken land is to discharge humid waste from the body, control his intake of liquids, and confine his diet to mostly dried food. Such preventive medicine must not be accompanied by any physical exercises or bathing in hot water. Otherwise, and under such circumstance, engaging in strenuous physical exercise or taking hot water bath will help some corrupted waste that sometimes remains in the body to mix with gastric juices and develop further health complications at a time when the disease is prevalent.

Instead one should confine himself to resting, controlling his emotions, and constraining his movements to preserve his strength and allow his natural defenses to work for him. Moreover, the commotion which is associated with leaving the plague-stricken land is often most stressful and demands strenuous efforts, while any movement under such circumstances may have adverse effects on one's body—God knows best.

As for the prophetic prohibition against entering a plague-stricken land, it means: (1) to follow common sense in preventing further sufferings and to preserve one's body for a greater role in serving and worshipping his Lord; (2) to prevent breathing corrupted air and thus fall prey to the disease; (3) to isolate the disease and prevent immediate contact with infected sufferers from the disease, as related in the traditions of Abu Dãwoud, who narrated: "Perspiration is the agent of destruction," which means, according to Ibn Qutaiba: "physical contact with a sick person promotes the same illness;" and, (4) contact with the disease may affect one's spirit and causes depression, which is also an agent of destruction.

In summary, the prophetic prohibition against such immediate contact means caution, prevention, and limiting exposure to destructive environment, while the second prohibition against fleeing from it if it occurs at one's residence means to prevent the spread of disease, and to place one's trust in God Almighty and to accept His decree, while using preventive methods to limit contamination. Such prophetic saying represents both practical instructions and control through knowledge.

On this subject, it is reported in the *siḫãḫ* (singl. *saḫĩḫ*) that Omar bin al-Khattãb once led a campaign toward Syria. On the road and close to his destination, he met Abu 'Ubaida al-Jarrãḫ and other companions who informed him about an epidemic that

Omar then asked Ibn 'Abbãss to call the émigrés (*muhãjireen*) to a private consultation in his tent, and they were divided in opinion whether to carry on their mission or to return to Medina. Omar then requested a private meeting with the Medinites who also were divided in opinion. He then asked for a private consultation with the elderly companions from the tribe of *Quraysh*, and there he found no two men in disagreement concerning canceling the campaign until later date, and to save the army from exposure to the epidemic, and Omar, God be pleased with him, announced his decision to take the army back to Medina. At that point Abu 'Ubaida al-Jarrãḫ asked: "Are you running away from God's decree?"

Omar replied: "I wish someone else had said that, O Abu 'Ubaida. Yes, indeed we will run away from one of God's decrees to another. Do you see, if while herding your camels you discover a valley with two distinct landscapes, one verdant and the second barren, and you drive them to the lush and verdant valley, you will be following God's will, and if you direct them to the dry and barren area, you will also be following God's will."

SECTION IV
TREATMENT OF DROPSY

Muslim narrated in his *sahīh* the saying of a group of visiting Arabs: "During our stay in the city of Medina, we experienced bowel abnormality. Our bowels became hardened, our bellies distended, and we felt general malaise, weakness and brittleness in our limbs..." When they brought their condition to the attention of God's Messenger ﷺ, he said: "You should seek the camel herd of *sadaqa* (charity) and drink from its urine and milk." Accordingly, and following known medical treatment then, they recovered from their illness. However, they later killed the shepherd, drove away the camel herd and fought against Allah and His Messenger ﷺ. This tradition is also narrated in *sahīh* Bukhāri.

Dropsy is a disease which is caused by a foreign cold virus that manifests abnormality in either externally visible signs or internal symptoms. This illness develops through accumulation of fluid in the cells, tissues or cavities in the body where food and gastric juices are mixed, resulting in abdominal swelling. There are three kinds of dropsy: (1) skin dropsy (*conjunctive*) affecting the tissues, and that is the most serious; (2) abdominal dropsy (*edema*) which can also affect the liver; and (3) tympanitic dropsy, causing distention of the abdomen by the accumulation of gas or air in the intestines or peritonial cavity.

Diuretics and laxatives are the most approved remedy for dropsy. They provide the body with gentle bowel movement and regular discharge of urine as needed. Such medicinal properties are also found in she-camels' urine and milk at the time of their estrous cycle. In fact, during estrus, she-camels' milk becomes whey-like, serous, or thin, clear and watery, and its whey becomes a natural antitoxin for the disease. For this reason, God's Messenger ﷺ recommended such remedy, for such quality of milk provides the needed detergent, mild laxative, proper urine discharge, and regularity of bowel movement. The effect of this medicine is stronger

when the camels' herd is feeding on the strong-smelling wormwood plant (*genus artemisia*), or the Eurasian perennial kind of absinthe (*artemisia absinthium*) which produces a dark-green and bitter oil, bog-rush, ground-cyprus, southern wood (*artemisia abrotanum*), gold wormwood (*artemisia camphorata*), *Artemisia sauve* (F), *scenanth* (*andropogon schœnanthus*), spikenard (*nardostachys jatamanis*) of the ginseng family, which carries whitish and sometimes yellowish flowers and has fragrant roots, or camel's hay as fodder, among other natural remedies for dropsy.

SECTION V
TREATMENT OF WOUNDS

It is reported in the sahīh that when someone inquired from Sahil bin Sa'ad about the method used by the companions to treat the wounds of he replied: "On the day of the battle of *Uhud*, God's Messenger ﷺ, was wounded in the face, his eyetooth broke, and his helmet collapsed over his head. I saw Fãtima, his daughter, God be pleased with her, cleaning his wound and steadily wiping the blood flowing all over his face. I also saw 'Ali, God bless his countenance, standing at her side and using his armor as a basin to wash the wound with water. When she realized that she could not control the flow of blood, she cut off a small piece of straw mat made of papyrus,[1] burned it to ashes and applied it to his wound until the blood clotted."

In fact, ashes produced from papyrus straws have strong agglutinating effects for clumping together the blood cells and in suspending the flow of blood. Such ashes also are highly absorbent and less irritating for wounds. On the other hand, applying strong absorbents and volatile antiseptics to one's wounds can agitate the blood and increase its flow. Using dry papyrus ashes as powder or mixing it with vinegar can stop epistaxis, or nosebleeding (Arb. *ru'ãf*). In his famous book "The Canon of Medicine", Avicenna also mentioned its use as an antiseptic agent to sterilize fresh wounds and to clot the blood.

The papyrus plant grows abundantly in the Nile region of Egypt, and was used in ancient Egypt for writing material. The papyrus plant is cold and dry and is useful to treat gangrenous sores of the mouth, as a blood clotting agent, and to prevent the spread of malignant ulcerations.

[1] (*Cyperus papyrus*) of the sedge family or of any of the monocotyledon plants

SECTION VI
CAUTERIZATION AND CUPPING

It is narrated in *sahīh* Bukhāri that Ibn 'Abbāss, God be pleased with him, quoted God's Messenger ﷺ as saying: "If the final cure lies between using a syrup of honey, sacrification by cupping or cauterization by fire, I utterly forbid my followers to use cauterization."

On this subject, *hakim* Abu 'Abdullāh al-Māziri said: "Congestive diseases are due to blood, yellow bile, phlegm, or black bile. When blood is the cause, then bloodletting is the remedy. Moreover, if the other three humors are the cause, then their remedies consist of using the respective cleansing purgatives." In the above prophetic saying, it appears as though God's Messenger ﷺ favors the use of honey as an important abluent and a mild prurient over acerbic laxatives, and he gave precedence to the use of sacrification by cupping over cauterization. Some commentators interpreted venesection (*phlebotomy*) as a branch of sacrification by cupping, and when medication is ineffectual, then cauterization by fire is the last resort.

In another prophetic tradition, God's Messenger ﷺ said: "I personally do not like to use cauterization." Here, God's Messenger ﷺ suggested cauterization as a curative only when other decongestive medications fail, and that expelling minor pain may not require resorting to sustaining extreme pain due to branding by fire. Sa'īd al-Khattābi narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ cauterized Sa'ad bin Mu'āz to prevent a hemorrhage which would have been fatal if not treated immediately.

Some physicians (*hakīms*) contend that humoral diseases are caused by either interaction with body fluids or without them. As we earlier stated, the four humors can be either hot, cold, moist, or dry, or they manifest as compounded and are known in Arabic as *akhlāt*. The temperaments of hot and cold are effective, while the moist and dry ones are passive. Ordinarily, an effective temperament occurs with a passive one. As such humors exist in a kinetic state, interspersing with the elements of the body, they constantly adjust to any imbalance of body fluids. Therefore, the substance of the prophetic saying concerning the basic nature of treating a hot or cold disease is in the cleansing of the blood with bloodletting by either cupping or venesection. Such procedures involve purgation and consequently prove cooling to the humor. On the other hand, treating a cold temperament requires heating

of the elements, and such property exists in honey and therefore does not require purgation, because honey is an aperient, a refurbisher, a solvent, and an abluent. Such humoral imbalance will be cured gently and safely in contrast to the discomfort associated with using a strong purgative.

As for administering cauterization by a hot element, God's Messenger ﷺ approved of its use only as a last resort because a humoral disease can either be: (1) acute and therefore will expire expeditiously without the need for cauterization; or (2) chronic, whereby cauterization is best performed on the affected limb after administering blood purgation. Moreover, such disease will become chronic once a cold and dense element burrows under the skin to develop a cold and thick crust that will obstruct the balanced function of the humor and that will spread and convert the cells next to it to its own kind. Such contagious disease can be cured by cauterization as a last resort in order to extricate the causative agent. Thus, from such prophetic traditions we learned about the treatment of obstinate diseases when the constitution defeats the strongest of medicines, as we learned the basic treatment of simple diseases from his saying: "The intensity of fever is a scorching torridity that is vented from the boiling of hell-fire, so cool it down with water."

CUPPING

As for the treatment of diseases by bloodletting through cupping as a therapeutic measure, several prophetic sayings are related in *sahĭh* Bukhāri and in the collection of traditions narrated by Ibn Māja among others. Ibn 'Abbāss also narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Blessed is a servant who practices cupping. It cleanses the blood, dries out internal inflammations, and brightens one's vision." He also said: "Cupping (*hijāma*) is one of the best medicines."

Abu Huraira narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "The seventeenth, nineteenth, and the twenty-first days of the (lunar) months are the best days for administering bloodletting through cupping." Ibn Māja also narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Some of your best treatments lie in taking medicinal snuff (of natural herbs), in venesection, in cupping, and in purgation." This particular saying is more applicable for the dwellers of the Arabian peninsula and countries of hot climate.

Benefits of Cupping

Cupping is a treatment for a variety of skin diseases. Cupping draws out blood through the skin pores, cleanses the skin of affected parts and draws the natural healing forces to the area. Sometimes, cupping is more effective for skin diseases than venesection, though bloodletting through venesection is a better treatment for abysmal diseases. Deciding to administer one of the two operations depends on several conditions including time, place, age, humors in hot climates, hot seasons and the individual's hot temperaments if his blood is agitated. Cupping is also helpful for a woman in provoking her menstrual flow. In such case, cupping brings out what venesection cannot. Cupping is better for younger people and for those who cannot brave venesection. *Ḫakīms* also agree that cupping is a better treatment in hot countries and venesection in cold ones. Cupping should be performed in the middle of the lunar month and when the moon is waning, and particularly during the third quarter of the month. This is because during the first half of the month, blood humor is cooler, uncongested, and is in a state of passive hyperemia. Though each humor ripens at varying intervals, they all reach the peak of their coction in the middle of the month and during the third quarter of it. The same opinion is stated by Avicenna, adding that "cupping should not be administered during the waxing of the moon because the humors and their compounds (*akẖlāṯ*) are not congested or coctant then, and during the last quarter of the month, the intensity of such coction will be inadequate to draw the full benefits of cupping."

The particular emphasis of this prophetic tradition on cupping is made for those who live in hot climates, and because their blood in thinner and is drawn closer to the surface of the skin. In hot climates, such attraction of the blood by the heat of the sun's rays may congest in various areas beneath the skin. Although dwellers of hot climates have larger pores, nevertheless sometimes during such heat they may feel exhausted and debilitated. For such prognosis, venesection is dangerous, while cupping causes a natural break up of any formation of blood congestion beneath the skin. This natural treatment accelerates a chain of metabolic processes in the blood humor which is followed by natural purgation and cleansing or flushing of the arteries, and particularly those arteries and veins that cannot be easily venesected. The flushing that occurs in each artery provides dedicated benefits. For example the blood flushing of the basilical vein abates the congestion and inflammations of the liver and the spleen. It also benefits in reducing pulmonary infections, pleurisy and most of the ephemeral blood

diseases affecting circulation from the area of under the knees and up to the hip joint. As for the median vein of the arm, flushing of its blood will prove beneficial in eliminating transient general bloating of the body if it is caused by the blood humor as well as general blood infection or toxemia. Flushing of the cephalic vein helps balancing ephemeral tremor of head, neck pain and blood congestion or symptoms of cyanosis caused by lack of oxygen or abnormal hemoglobinic condition in the blood. As for the blood flushing of the jugular veins, it helps in cardiac spleen, asthmatic disorder, chronic headache, herpetic eruption and heaviness of eyelids.

Imam Bukhãri narrated in his *sahïh* that Anas, God be pleased with him said: "God's Messenger ﷺ was cupped between the shoulder blades and the two posterior neck veins." 'Ali, God bless his countenance, narrated that it was the archangel Gabriel that prescribed such cupping to God's Prophet, upon whom be peace. Also in the *sahïh* it is narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ used cupping for a headache he endured during the pilgrimage while wearing *ihrãm*. Also in the traditions of Abi Dãwoud, Jãbir related that God's Messenger ﷺ applied cupping to his hip because of some strains he sustained.

Administering cupping between the shoulder blades (*kãhil*) helps cure shoulder pain, pains in the upper arms and pain of the throat. Cupping over the two posterior neck veins (*akhda'ain*) helps treat tremor of head and other conditions of the head (i.e., face, teeth, ears, eyes, nose, and throat) whether such conditions originate from blood infection or from bloating caused by the blood humor.

POINTS OF APPLICATION

Tibb medicine holds different opinions concerning cupping the vertex of the skull (*jawzat al-qamhouda*). On this subject, Abu Na'ïm al-Asfahãni in his book, also called "Medicine of the Prophet", narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Apply cupping to the vertex of the skull, for it cures five diseases," among which he cited leprosy. In another correct tradition (*sahïh*) he also recommended the same treatment, adding: "...for it cures seventy-two diseases." *Hakïms* who researched this prophetic tradition have mentioned some of its benefits, such as: abnormal protrusion of the eyeball (*exophthalmic goiter*), swelling out of the frontal bone of the skull (*frontospheniodal process*), besides other indications, including heaviness of eyelids and eyebrows. Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal inquired about the prophetic tradition of cupping of the

vertex of the skull, though when he himself needed such treatment, he applied the treatment to the two sides of the vertex. As for Avicenna, he disliked its use, and said: "When administered often, it begets forgetfulness." The same opinion is stated in another prophetic tradition which says: "The vertex of the skull is the point of memorization; cupping it begets forgetfulness." *Hakïms* who argue the authenticity of this prophetic saying contend that such cupping will only enfeeble the back of the brain (*occipital*) when unnecessarily performed, otherwise, when used to overcome blood congestion of the brain or an *apoplectic stroke* it will certainly be of benefit according to both medical and religious code.

Applying cupping under the chin helps reduce toothache, face pain, cleanses the head and reduces throat pain when used at the proper time. Cupping on the top of the foot and over the ankle bone is a preferred substitute for venesection (*phlebotomy*) of the saphena (Arb. *al-sãfin*) which is a large vein of the leg and ends over the ankle bone (*malleolus*). Such cupping helps against inflammation of testicles, leg ulcers, and suppressed menses, while cupping behind the knee (*popliteal space*) helps in the treatment of aneurysm, chronic abscesses, hemorrhoids, and septic ulcer of leg and foot, and cupping on inner thighs is a good treatment for irritation of the back, gout, and piles.

Prophetic Guidance On The Best Time to Apply Cupping

Imam al-Tirmithi also reported the earlier-mentioned prophetic saying which is narrated by Ibn 'Abbãss that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "The seventeenth, nineteenth, and the twenty-first days of the (lunar) months are the best days for administering bloodletting through cupping." In another tradition, he also said: "Treat yourselves with cupping and do not let high blood pressure (*hyperemia; Arb. tabayyugh*) kill you." However, *hakïms* agree that bloodletting through cupping is a beneficial treatment at any other time during an illness. In the traditions of Abu Dãwoud, a similar saying is narrated by Abu Huraira, that God's Messenger ﷺ once added: "It is a cure for every disease—meaning every disease that is caused by increase of the blood flow in an organ or tissue or by blood congestion (*hyperemia*). Al-Khallãl narrated that Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal treated himself with cupping to quell blood agitation without regard to date or time. As for Avicenna, he recommended "cupping to be administered around two or three o'clock in the afternoon immediately after taking a hot bath except where there is increase in the viscosity of the blood, whereby one should take

a bath and allow himself to sweat for an hour before applying cupping glasses."

Cupping should not be administered after a meal, for it may cause indigestion, and particularly after eating a coarse meal where it may engender discharge of drops of humors, and/or swelling with gout. God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Cupping on an empty stomach is a medicine and on a full stomach is a disease."

In essence, giving preference to date and time for administering cupping is mostly a matter of precaution against unnecessary applications for a healthy person. Otherwise, in case of illness, and if the physician finds it indispensable, then one must apply the cupping procedure when and where needed. As for the prophetic saying: "Treat yourselves with cupping and do not let high blood pressure (*tabayyugh*) kill you," this tradition relates mostly to those who actually suffer from high blood pressure, wherein the cupping procedure alleviates such tension, and we pointed out earlier the practice of Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal who treated himself with cupping without regard to date or time.

The Best Days to Apply Cupping

In his book *al-Afrãd,* al-Darqotni related that 'Abdullãh bin Omar quoted God's Messenger ﷺ as saying: "Cupping increases one's memory and wisdom. Apply cupping in the Name of Allah, but do not apply it on Thursday, Friday, Saturday or Sunday, while Monday is the best." Al-Khallãl in his collection of prophetic traditions asked Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal: "Which days of the week do you dislike to apply cupping?" He replied: "In this matter, I know that Saturday and Wednesday are reported in the traditions, and some say Friday." Abu Bakr, God be pleased with him, used to dislike cupping on Tuesday, and referred to the prophetic saying: "On Tuesday blood does not readily clot." (*Reported by Abu Dãwoud*) As for cupping on Wednesday, Abu Huraira, God be pleased with him, narrated another prophetic saying: "Let one who uses cupping on Saturday or on Wednesday and then suffers from leukemia or leprosy blame only himself."

Conclusion On The Benefits of Cupping

From the above explanations, we conclude that according to prophetic traditions, medical treatment is necessary, and cupping is recommended and must be applied to the needed part of the body. Cupping can be performed during the pilgrimage even if it requires shaving of one's hair for medical reasons without the

need for ceremonial redemption or *fidya* (*Islamic Law*). Cupping may not break one's fast except under one of the following three conditions: (1) when fasting is prescribed; (2) when one is not on a journey; and (3) when no illness requires its application. However, Imam Bukhãri did report in his *sahi̇h* that "God's Messenger ﷺ applied cups during fasting," and this is perhaps the case of voluntary fasting (*nafl*) — Allah knows best.

SECTION VII
VENESECTION AND CAUTERIZATION

Jãbir bin 'Abdullãh narrated that "God's Messenger ﷺ sent a physician to Abye bnu Ka'ab who bled him from a vein then cauterized it" (*sahïh Bukhãri*). It is also quoted in the correct traditions (*sahïh*) that "when an arrow wounded Sa'ad bin Mu'ãz in his forearm (*akhal*), God's Messenger ﷺ cauterized it with a heated thin arrow (*mishkhas*). Later on, the wound became swollen and infected and he bled it, then cauterized it again." Abu 'Ubaid narrated that a wounded person was brought before God's Messenger ﷺ, who said: "Cauterize his wound, then compress it with a (washed and) heated rock." Although God's Messenger ﷺ used cauterization as a last resource, nevertheless he affirmed: "If there is a choice in treatment between venesection or cauterization, I personally do not like cauterization" (*Bukhãri and Muslim*). In another prophetic saying, we quoted earlier, God's Messenger ﷺ forbad cauterization, but he did also say: "...We were faced with trials, but we did not succeed at overcoming them, nor did we take heed (to God's guidance)." [*fabtulina famã aflahnã wa la anj'anã*] (*Tirmithi*).

Al-Khattãbi commented that "the wound of Sa'ad bin Mu'ãz was cauterized to help his blood clot, and God's Messenger ﷺ was concerned that if it were not treated immediately, Sa'ad would have bled to death."

Cauterization should be used only as a medical treatment, and is permitted only under dire need just as it is vital in the case of amputation. As for its prohibition, it is intended to counter a social belief that it is manly and that one may die unless he braves such treatment even for a minor cut. That is why God's Messenger ﷺ forbade its use as a social custom and because of such declared intention. This attitude became clearer in the case of Omrãn bin Hasïn, who strongly believed in cauterization and branding as cure for every disease. God's Messenger ﷺ recognized, in the case of Omrãn, that cauterization of his particular wound

would be dangerous, and he forbade its application. In this instance, it appears that the prohibition applied to critical areas in the body, God knows best. On this subject, Ibn Qutaiba indicated that "there are two kinds of cauterizations: (1) By 'social customs', as in the case of a healthy person, which is the one meant by God's Messenger's saying: "One who utilizes branding does not trust in God;" and (2) medical, as in the case of a festered wound, or after amputation, and this is what is meant by "as a cure." When cauterization is recommended as a potential cure, but without certainty, then it is not favored.

It is narrated in the *sahīh* that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Seventy-thousand people among my followers will enter paradise without reckoning—those who do not secretly listen to people's private conversations, those who do not cauterize, and those who are not pessimistic, and those who place their entire trust in their Lord." Thus, the prophetic traditions spoke of cauterization and branding in four distinct ways: (1) to use it; (2) not to use it; (3) to praise one who forgoes such therapy; and (4) to prohibit it. All praises be to God Almighty—their is no contradiction between these four opinions, for one may use such treatment when medically needed, making it permissible though disliked. As for its prohibition, it is a matter of choice and personal disposition, and particularly when used as a 'social custom'—God knows best.

SECTION VIII
TREATMENT OF EPILEPSY

It is reported by 'Atã bin Abi Rabãh in the correct traditions (*SAHĪH*) that Ibn 'Abbãss once said to him: "Would you like to see a woman who is one of the dwellers of paradise?" 'Atã replied: "Indeed." Ibn 'Abbãss said: "Look at this black woman! She once came before God's Messenger ﷺ and said: 'I suffer from epileptic seizures and I become unintentionally exposed during such fits. Please pray to Allah to cure me.' God's Messenger ﷺ replied: 'If you wish, you may bear patiently with your condition and be awarded paradise, and if you wish otherwise, I will pray to Allah for your recovery.' The woman replied: 'I would rather exercise patience.' After thinking for a moment, the woman added: 'During seizure I become unintentionally exposed, so pray to Allah that my modesty be guarded.' God's Messenger ﷺ then prayed for her sake."

There are two kinds of epilepsy (Arb. *sar'a*): (1) one which manifests in a person who allows himself to be controlled by earthly evil spirits, and is commonly known as being possessed; and (2) a psychosomatic disorder that originates from physical aggravation of humors in the human body, known in *tibb* medicine as the corruption of *akhlãt*, or putrefaction of primary humors. The second one is the kind which secular physicians speak of and endeavor to treat, while the first kind is only recognized by their betters and chief physicians. Such masters acknowledge it but do not treat it. They also recognize that its cure lies in countering the influence of evil spirits with the presence of noble and eminent ones. When one is successful at winning the company of spirits of positive influence, such good will neutralize the effects of evil and obliterate its menace. As for secular physicians who consider base action and abominable, prurient thoughts as virtue, a challenge, and a right, they refuse to acknowledge the constant battle and influence of opposing spirits, and tend to deny their emotional and physiological influence over the human body, though without certainty on their part. However, in reality such idiocy constitutes no part of the medical profession when the effects are physically evident and traceable. Their tendency to attribute it to psychosomatic disorder is partially true. Ancient physicians sometimes called epilepsy a '*Dominant disease*' because it happens in the head. Galen, among others, analyzed such name and attributed its etymology to a disorder that takes place in the head and, according to him, affects the sacred trust of divine knowledge stored in the cerebrum which controls the conscious and voluntary process. Of course, this opinion is also untrue and is the result of secular physicians' ignorance of the existence of such spirits (*arwãh*), their constitution and functions. Secular physicians came to their conclusion when they could not prove anything besides the putrefaction of primary humors. However, anyone with a brain, and with little thinking can easily recognize the existence of such spirits and their influences, and furthermore, he will certainly laugh at these physicians' unfounded assertions and weakness of their proof.

TREATMENT OF EPILEPSY

Epilepsy can be treated by either the patient himself or by his *hakim*. As for the self-therapeutic action, it depends on the patient's faith and his willingness to take control over his own emotional disorder. It also depends on the strength of his determination and his true and sincere turning to and seeking

the help of the Originator and Creator of all lives and their Sustainer. He also must truly and sincerely seek refuge in the Lord of the universes, with his tongue of truth and innermost heart. This is called the inner battle. A warrior can only win victory over his enemy when he firmly trusts in his weapon, or when his arm is invincibly strong to compensate for a less reliable weapon. When either his trust or his arm is incapable of engaging in such battle, the weapon will fail no matter what it is. His heart will be in ruins, shabby, ineffective and incapable of knowing its Lord, and it will lack true faith, trust, piety or even direction. In truth, such a person is powerless and is doomed to destruction unless God's mercy descends upon him to show him a way out of his predicament.

Treating Epilepsy with Exorcism

As for the spiritual treatment of epilepsy by a skilled *hakim*, such a wise man must be a truly experienced doctor (i.e., Shaikh) and a strong believer. Otherwise, his interference will be of no benefit, and may instead be dangerous for both the patient and his doctor. In the case of a true Shaikh, it may even be sufficient for him to banish such alien spirit by directly addressing it and firmly saying to it: "Get out of him" (*ukhruji minhu*); or he can invoke the power of God's name upon it, saying: "In the name of Allah, get out of him," (*Bismillãh, ukhruji minhu*); or by saying: "There is no power or will except that of Allah."

لاَ حَوْلَ وَلاَ قُوَّةَ إلاَّ بِاللّه

It is narrated in the traditions that God's Messenger ﷺ used to address such spirits by saying: "Get out of him O enemy of Allah. I am the Messenger of Allah, and I command you to do so."

I once witnessed my shaikh send someone who spoke to the alien spirit (*rüh*) that inhabited such a person, and my shaikh said to it: "The shaikh says to you to get out of him, for it is not lawful for you to remain therein," and immediately the epilepsy-stricken patient woke up from his fit. Such envoy also may address the alien spirit on his own by ordering it to leave its victim. Sometimes, such spirit maybe a rebel demon (*mãrid*) who will only come out of the patient when forced to do so. However, when the patient wakes up from his seizure, he would have felt no pain from such chastisement. We have witnessed such exorcism, as did several of our brothers on the path. Many times, our shaikh recited a Qur'anic verse (*ãyah*) in the ear of the patient, such as: ❨ Did

you think that We had created you in jest, and that ye would not be brought back to us (for reckoning)? › (*Qur'an 23:115*).

One time, the shaikh recited this verse and prolonged the last vowel "*—'oun*" until the alien evil spirit boastfully replied, using the victim's own voice and saying: "Indeed!" Immediately our shaikh reached out for a reed stick he kept beside him and he descended with it upon the patient, beating him over the posterior veins of both sides of his neck. The people witnessing the event thought that the man would definitely die from such unrelenting and severe beating. One time during such exorcism, the spirit screamed loud in despair and said: "But I love him!" The shaikh replied: "He does not love you." The spirit then said: "I want to perform a pilgrimage to Mecca with him!" The shaikh replied: "He does not want to perform his pilgrimage to Mecca with you." The spirit then agreed: "I will leave him for your sake." The shaikh replied: "Nay, not for my sake, but in obedience to the command of Allah and that of His Messenger ﷺ." The spirit then conceded: "Then I will leave him right now." Instantly, the patient regained his consciousness as if a heavy weighty was lifted off from his shoulders, and he sat in wonderment looking around him to the right and to the left, saying: "What brought me before the presence of the eminent shaikh ?" The people asked: "What about all the beating you underwent?" The man replied: "What beating, and why would the reverent shaikh beat me and I have done nothing that warrants any chastisement?" In fact, after a thorough investigation and questioning, it appeared that the man was not at all conscious of what happen to him that mourning.

The shaikh sometimes recited the verse of the Divine Throne (*ãyat-ul Kursï; Qur'an 2:255*). He also used to recommend that the patient and the person treating him oft-recite this verse besides other powerful verses and prophetic prayers for protection against the invasion of evil spirits, such as chapters 113 and 114 from the holy Qur'an. In summary, this kind of epilepsy and the validity of such treatment can only be denied by an unfortunate person whose luck of learning, wisdom and true knowledge are unsubstantial. On the other hand, evil and corrupted spirits mostly attack weak people who have little or no faith, whose hearts are corrupt and whose tongues are not accustomed to speaking the truth, reciting the Qur'an, or invoking the prayers of God's Messenger ﷺ against the presence of such adulterating assailants. Hence, sometimes when a wondering evil spirit discovers a spiritually corrupt, defenseless and unarmed person, or even a naked person,

it takes advantage of such condition, uses his body as its abode, and controls his movements. In fact, if you were to unmask the conscious (*nafs*) of the majority of people, or lift off their hood and look under their skin, you will certainly find them subservient to such evil spirits at one level or another. Such spirits will tie them up to their ropes, manipulate them and direct them as they please. When such a person refuses to obey, he frequently suffers from intense epileptic seizure until he or she are tamed with such corrupt routines. The only way out of this kind of epilepsy is the correct diagnosing of the illness, and the separation between the two opposites, and only then, by God's leave, will one recognize that he was the demented and possessed victim (*maṣrou'*) of such haunting evil spirits.

The basic cure of such epileptic condition (*ṣar'a*) is the rehabilitation of one's sanity and the revival of his faith. This cure must begin by first becoming free from such invading evil spirits; by rehabilitation through association with righteous people; by becoming aware of the divine doing; and by subscribing to the divine commands. This is also a preventive medicine which is based on sound reasoning (*'aql*), coupled with true faith (*imãn*). One also must recognize that what God's messengers brought is true; and that heaven and hell are true; that death is true; that the reckoning of the grave is true; that the resurrection is true; and that the hour of judgement is true. Once unfettered and freed from such illicit invasion of privacy, one must gaze upon the creation and contemplate the predicament of this world, head the divine warnings, reflect upon others' misfortune, the subtle and measured terms of destiny, and the incessant blows of calamities while the majority of people are inebriated and unaware of the causes. What a punishment!

In fact, when secular life becomes a norm, and as the hand of destiny strikes harder, the majority of people become blind and see calamities as a common nature. They do not recognize their own illness nor those of others. Furthermore, and because of the wide variety and levels of epileptic conditions, besides mass destruction and subsequent spread of epidemics, there will be a constant denial, and such affected people will turn their eyes backward and recognize no victim nor assailant. Mostly, in their unbalanced mind, every moment of selfish pleasure is beyond capture whatever maybe the price, and no matter who is paying for it, and a new order of thinking will develop in their minds. On the other hand, and only if God Almighty wills, He will awaken

the conscious of His servant from slumber. Such a person will look to the right and to the left and recognize that the majority of the people of the world are struck with blindness and chronic epileptic conditions, regardless of their class and degree of their fit. Some of their seizures are more acute than others. Some act sober for a moment and crazy for another. When such a person wakes up from his seizure, he acts normal and constructive, and when he is seized anew, he stumbles in the sinful and self-destructive peddling of the idiots. The question will rise again: ❮ Did you think that We had created you in jest, and that ye would not be brought back to us (for reckoning)? ❯

Treatment of Corrupted Humors

As for the treatment of psychosomatic disorder, or the putrefaction of primary humors (*akhlãt*), one must recognize that this disease partially hinders the normal functions of the nervous system, and weakens natural voluntary actions. This is also knows as psychosomatic epilepsy. It manifests abnormal increase in the amount of fluid in the cranium also known as *hydrocephaly*, allowing the maturation of a thick viscid mucous that causes swelling in the membranes of the head (*delirium*), partial blockage of the cerebrum (*mukhkh*), and sometimes causing enlargement of the head and deterioration of the brain. This also will hinder normal reflexes and feeling, and produce the kind of epilepsy knows as *myoclonous* epilepsy. Other symptoms include: obstruction caused by accumulation of gases; thickening and putrefaction of the air in the body; development of foul vapors causing imbalance and inability to stand up; excess phlegm in the brain; or other acute symptoms besides other signs of damage to the central nervous system and imbalance of the phlegm humor. When an epileptic seizure is cause by a sudden internal sharp attack, it causes contraction of the brain that is followed by a spasmodic reaction of the limbs, making it impossible for the person to voluntarily stand up, and consequently he will collapse, and sometimes froth at the mouth. This case is considered acute, and particularly when accompanied with sharp pain. At such stage, this illness is regarded as chronic because of its severity, duration and difficulty of recuperating from it. This is particularly true when the person inflicted with epilepsy exceed twenty-five years of age with the disease affecting his brain and the nerve fibers and cells. Hippocrate of Cos (460 B.C.), calls this kind of epilepsy "chronic that does not fully respond to medications till death." When this is recognized, one will understand the case we earlier cited of the woman who

came before God's Messenger ﷺ and said: "I suffer from epileptic seizures... etc." Recognizing her condition, God's Messenger ﷺ suggested to her a choice between the prospect of recovery through prayers, and the confident expectation of winning paradise if she would exercise patience with her illness. The woman made her choice of exercising patience, and he prayed that her modesty be guarded. This is another prophetic lead that when a disease is chronic, it is sometimes permissible to forgo medical treatment and to solicit the divine favors to cure the real illness of the soul. In fact, the divine power of healing needs no proof of effectiveness, for He is the Creator and Originator of the disease and of its cure. We have, as did many people, tried the remedy of true prayers for what is recognized as incurable diseases, and through His bounty we enjoyed recovery. Wise physicians already recognize the phenomena of psychological healing powers, and sometimes their effectiveness in curing chronic conditions. On the other hand, nothing harms the medical profession more than the opinions of secular physicians, the majority of whom are mostly self-centered, and whose enterprises are self-defeating.

SECTION IX
TREATMENT OF SCIATICA

INFLAMMATION OF THE SCIATIC NERVE

Ibn Māja reported in his collection of traditions (*Sunan Ibn Māja*) a narration by Imam Muhammad Ibn Seerīn, who recorded a prophetic tradition related by Imam Anas bin Mālik, that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Sciatica can be treated by melting the fat tail (*ilya*) of an Arabian sheep and drinking it on an empty stomach in three equal portions, one every morning."

Sciatic artery, known in Arabic as *Urqu n-Nassā*, is a long nerve that passes from the region of the hip joint (*ischium*), which is the lowermost of the three sections of the innominate bone, and extends from the back of the thigh and down to the heels (*malleoli*). Inflammation of the sciatic artery which may be caused by injury or pressure affects the surrounding nerves and causes throbbing pain. Suffering from sciatica for a prolonged period of time may extend the pain from the hip region and down through the shinbone (*tibia*) between the knee and down to the ankle and the tendon. Other accompanying symptoms of a lingering sciatica include weight loss and scrawniness of the thigh or atrophy. The above prophetic tradition has two basic meanings: (1) linguistic;

and (2) medical. As for the linguistic sense, *nassã* in Arabic may indicate the sciatic artery itself, and/or in conjunction with the severely sharp and incapacitating pain that accompanies it and causes the patient to forget anything besides it. As for the medical meaning, sciatica refers to the inflammation of such artery and its surrounding nerves, causing throbbing pain down to the ankle bone. Attacks are intermittent and sometime last for a long day, and the patient's sufferings may last for several months. Pain usually recurs at the same time in the evening.

As explained in earlier chapters, the sayings of God's Messenger ﷺ are of two types: (1) General; and (2) specific. As for the general it refers to the time, place, person, and condition. The second type is the specific, and in this case relates to treatment of sciatica for the bedouin Arabs and people of surrounding lands for whom this treatment is the best for that time and place. Whether the cause is fractures of the pelvis, dislocation of the hip, a mild arthritic inflammations, or other dislodgments that put pressure on the sciatic nerve, this illness causes dryness, or imbalance of moisture (*i.e.*, development of viscid coagulable substance), and results in heat, swelling and loss of function. In the second case of imbalance of moisture, such substance can be treated by loosening of the bowel movement, using the prescribed melted fat which also contain the properties of maturation and laxative.

When the animal feed includes such hot plants as cohosh root, roots of plants of the myrtle family, wormwood plant, and cyprus among other vegetations, their medicinal properties become part of the animal's meat and fat. One also can use such plants as herbs, or he can use a liniment made of a mixture of such oils and rub it along the sciatic nerve, or apply them as hot pads.

Hence, and as we mentioned in earlier chapters, the illnesses of people who use simple diet is commonly treated with simple medications, and the illnesses of people who use a more assorted and complex diet require treatment with compound medications. However, all physicians (*hakïms*) agree that only when natural food cannot provide the needed remedy that one may prescribe a drug, and only when a simple drug fails that one may prescribe compounded drugs.

SECTION X
DRYNESS OF TEMPERAMENTS AND NATURE'S NEED TO BALANCE THEM

Imam al-Tirmithi reported in his collection of prophetic traditions (*jãmi' al-Tirmithi*), and Imam Ibn Mãja reported in his collection of prophetic practices (*Sunan ibn Mãja*) narrated by Asmã' Bint 'Umays that God's Messenger ﷺ in reply to one of her questions said: "What do you use for purgative?" She replied: "I use euphorbia[1] (*euphorbiales*) as a softener and an aperient." He replied: "It is too hot and strong. I myself use senna seeds[2] ." Also reported in *Sunan Ibn Mãja* that 'Abdullãh bin Haram heard God's Messenger ﷺ answer a related question by saying: "Use senna and cumin (or aniseed)."[3]

The Prophet's inquiry about Asmã's use of natural aperient is of course intended to help her recognize a better stimulant to naturally cleanse the passages from materials otherwise harmful for her system. Using a natural laxative to loosen the bowels and relieve constipation indicates that the use of strong laxatives may do more harm than good to one's system. In fact, constipation causes dryness of temperaments and obstruction of bowel passages and should be treated with its opposite. An aperient is called in Arabic *mashy*, meaning to walk, to move, or to function. This is because the user seeks repeatedly to eliminate obstructed decoctions and other fecal matters. The bark of plants of the spurge family (*euphorbiaceae*),[4] and particularly the Indian kind, including the ancient milkwort (*euphorbia antiquorum*) was used in ancient medicine for the treatment of the spleen and dropsy as well. However, its strong laxative properties are commonly used today as a purgative in veterinary medicine. This wild plant is hot and dry in the fourth degree and most *hakïms* advise against its use because of the caustic chemical reaction it causes in the body.[5]

As for senna, the best is the Meccan senna which is a noble and a safe plant. Meccan senna leaves act as a mild laxative and are considered hot and dry in the first degree. Its other benefits

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[1] Arb. *shubrum*; Euphorbe pityuse (F).
[2] Meccan senna; (Arb. sanã; *genus cassia*) used by herbalists as a laxative. Seek American senna leaves.
[3] Sanüt: a/k/a Cumin; *Cuminum cyminum*; or the *pimpinella anisum* used for expelling intestinal gas, an infusion of senna taken after soaking the leaves for at least 12 hours.
[4] Euphorbia; a medical plant said to be named after *Euphorbus*, a physician of the 1st century.
[5] The least dangerous kind among such plants known today is the Mexican fire-plant (*euphorbia heterophylla*).

include cleansing of the yellow bile and the black bile, and it is used in the treatment of angina of the heart (*angina pectoris*), black jaundice, hepatitis, herpes simplex, cracking of the skin, migraine headache, hair loss, lice, scabies, skin pimples, itching, and epilepsy, and it relaxes muscle tension.

FORMULA:

It is better to boil Meccan senna leaves (*casia angustifolia*), or cook them and drink their water rather than taking it powdered. As a solution, one may take up to three drams, and as powder, one may take up to five drams. When cooked, Meccan senna leaves can be mixed with some sweet violet flowers and seedless red raisins. Imam al-Rãzi prescribed senna and ramping fumitory as purgatives to flush out putrefaction in the primary humors. He also prescribed the use of four drams up to seven drams of senna for such treatment.

Other secondary aperients include cumin, aniseed, rosemary, frankincense, fennel (*feniculum officinale*), which is also used as diuretic and for the treatment of spasms, while addiction to fennel increases sexual drive, and sexual excess may cause ulceration. *Hakïms* also recommend taking a spoonful of mixed ground fennel, or any of the abovementioned seeds, together with ghee and honey for a natural mild laxative.

SECTION XI
WEARING SILK FOR THE TREATMENT OF ITCH

It is narrated in the two books of prophetic traditions (*Sahïh Muslim and Sahïh Bukhãri*) that Qatãda related a prophetic saying reported by Anas bin Mãlik in which God's Messenger ﷺ gave permission to 'Abdu-Rahmãn bin 'Awf and al-Zubair bin al-'Awwãm to wear silken garments because of a severe skin irritation they suffered. In another narration, 'Abdu-Rahmãn bin 'Awf and al-Zubair bin al-'Awwãm, God be pleased with them, complained to God's Messenger ﷺ about a skin irritation they suffered from body lice, and he granted them permission to wear shirts made of silk.

Wearing silk for men deals with two basic aspects: (1) The first is canonical (*fiqh*); and (2) the second is medical. As for the canonical aspect, it is clearly understood by all Muslims that

wearing silk garments is permissible for women and not for men except for dire need, such as in the case of extreme cold weather and having nothing else to clothe oneself with, or for a medical reason where one may wear a silken garment to control severe skin irritation caused by itch, body lice, mange, or scabies. Such treatment is also recognized both by Imam Aḫmad and Imam Shãfi'i, who agree on the lawfulness in treating oneself for medical reasons with what is unlawful, although in this case Imam Mãlik forbade its use, substantiating that not all permissions extend beyond the particular medical cases dealt with by God's Messenger ﷺ. In that regard, it is also reported in the correct traditions (*ṣaḫĩḫ*) that when someone asked God's Messenger ﷺ about wine, he replied: "Wine is not medicine."

As for the medical aspect: silk is a fiber which is produced by silkworms (a caterpillar of the Bombycidae family) to form their cocoons. A silken thread is then extracted from cultivated cocoons to make a fabric which is used for clothing. Silk is a noble fiber and has many medicinal benefits: (1) it strengthens the heart; (2) it is classified as a stimulant; (3) it is considered a treatment for melancholia; (4) it is considered a treatment for the intemperament of the black bile and their complications; and (5) it strengthens one's sight when used as kohl for the eyes. Silk is hot and dry in the first degree, although some *ḫakĩms* classify it as hot and moist. As for its long term harm, it is suggested by researchers that when silk is worn by men for an extended period of time, it produces a chemical reaction or a steric hindrance in males, besides other physiological disorders that affect the changing of spermatid into spermatozoon in males' semen.

The same prohibition applies to wearing gold or using it for men except for medicinal purposes. Gold is evenly balanced. It also strengthens the heart; it contains a delicate heat; and is a carminative. Therefore, the prohibition against wearing silk and gold for men has much to do with the negative chemical reaction and steric hindrance they produce in males, and subsequently, their harm is greater than their benefits. Hence, at a time when the prophetic wisdom is misunderstood because of lack of knowledge and familiarity, for one to benefit from its guidance, one must unconditionally subscribe to it and not contest it until such time as human knowledge advances, and God Almighty permits access to His infinite wisdom and reveals some of the countless wonders of His creation.

Classification of Dress Categories

Imam al-Rãzi explains that "silk [Arb. *harïr; ibrïsam*] is warmer than linen and cooler than cotton." According to him, "wearing silk promotes a healthy skin, while wearing a coarse garment dries out the skin, causes loss of flesh and weight, and vice-versa." As for Imam Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, he classifies clothing in three categories: (1) a garment that warms up the body and generates heat; (2) a garment that warms up the body but does not generate heat; and (3) a garment that neither warms up the body nor generates heat. There is no such fabric that produces heat but does not warm up the body. Garments made of wool, hair and fur (Arb. *wabar*), warm up the body and generate heat, while garments made of linen and cotton warm up the body but do not generate heat, and silk is softer and cooler than cotton. Silk does not generate heat as does cotton; instead, it is a temperate material and is less effective in dissolving matters the body needs to purge under heat. Any garment with smooth, soft, and glossy texture and which provides coolness is more suitable for hot climates. Silk embodies no coarse texture and hence allows for the healing of itch, for such skin irritation is aggravated with heat and dryness. Hence, God's Messenger ﷺ granted 'Abdu-Rahmãn bin 'Awf and al-Zubair bin al-'Awwãm permission to wear shirts made of silk to allow for such recovery. Furthermore, the material nature of silk creates an environment which is opposite to that of body lice, and therefore can help in their elimination.

On this subject, it is reported in the *sahïh* that Abu Musa al-Ash'ari, God be pleased with him, narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Allah forbade the men among my followers to wear silk or gold and permitted that for women." In another narration reported in *sahïh* Bukhãri, God's Messenger ﷺ forbade wearing silk, brocade or gold or to sit on them, and added: "This is for them in this world, and for you in the next."

Section XII
Pleurisy

Imam al-Tirmithi narrated in his collection of prophetic traditions (*jãmi'*) that Zaid bin al-Arqam quoted God's Messenger ﷺ as saying: "Treat pleurisy with leaves from the Indian aloe tree[1] mixed with oils."

[1] Also see **1**. pleurisy root: North American plant; or butterfly weed, formerly used as cure for pleurisy; **2**. Agallochabaum; **3**. Calambac tree. (Cf. Part III)

There are two kinds of pleurisy (Arb. *t͟hãt ul-janb*): (1) True; and (2) false. True pleurisy is a severe inflammation of the membrane lining of the side of the chest (L. *pleuro*: rib; A. *janb*: side) and surrounding the lung, also causing swelling of the pleura, often accompanied by the exudation of liquid into the chest cavity; while false pleurisy which is also characterized by difficulty in breathing accompanied by pain of the pleura, though caused by entrapment of harmful heavy putrefied gases between the membranes around the sides, and its pain can be mistaken for pleurisy or swelling of the internal pleura (*diaphragmitis*). The difference between the two types of pain is that in false pleurisy the pain is sometimes constant, while in true pleurisy the pain comes as sudden, poignant, sharp, and accompanied with fever. H̲akïm Avicenna in his book "Cannon of Medicine" describes this diseases as an inflammation affecting the membrane lining, ribs, chest muscles, and surrounding the lung, also known as *s͟hawṣa*[1] and *birsãm*[2] in Arabic. There are many vague symptoms of pain of the pleura, many a times, most of them are incorrectly called pleurisy because of the root of the word *pleura* (Gr > rib; side). That is why Hypocrite recommended that sufferers from rib pain may benefit from taking hot baths. Other *tibb* physicians (*h̲akïms*) diagnose also as pleurisy any complications of the pleura which are caused by imbalance of humors, whether or not they are accompanied by inflammations of the ribs, high fever, redness of the face and cheeks, thirst, pain, and swellings. The symptoms of true pleurisy are high fever, coughing, severe asthmatic condition, irregular sawlike pulse, and breathing difficulty.

Therefore, the prophetic saying referred to in this section does not relate to true pleurisy, but rather to false pleurisy that is caused by the imprisonment of gases around the sides of the chest. In this case, the bark of the aloe wood is crushed to powder, mixed with lukewarm vegetable oil and rubbed on the sides. Such mix also can be taken orally to help expel the entrapped gases and balance bowel movements.

Aloe wood is hot, dry and costive. Such constipation also will help in balancing bowel movements, opening the passages, expelling entrapped harmful gases and breaking up excess moisture. It is also said that aloe wood benefits the brain and can ease the recovery from true pleurisy when caused by imbalance of the phlegm, and particularly when the symptoms are weak—God knows best.

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[1] Arb. *S͟hawṣa*; pleurisy (E).
[2] Arb. *Birsãm*; Pleurisy (E).

It is reported in the *sahih* that God's Messenger ﷺ was staying at the house of Maimouna, God be pleased with her, when he fell ill during his latter days. From time-to-time, and when he felt better, he would leave and lead the congregational prayers. When his illness intensified, he ordered that Abu Bakr should lead the prayers. Once, during his intermittent throes, his consort, his uncle al-'Abbāss, Um al-Fadhl Bint al-Hārith, and Asmā Bint 'Umays gathered around him, and in their confusion, they decided to force a medicine upon him by driving it through the side of his mouth (Arb. *ladd*). When he suddenly addressed their intent, he asked: "Who did this to me? This can only be the work of women who have come from there," and he pointed out towards Abyssinia. In fact, it was Um Salma and Asmā who performed it. The women then said: "O God's Messenger, we were afraid that you may be suffering from pleurisy!" He further inquired: "What did you infuse into me?" They replied: "Indian aloe powder and kamala[1] mixed with lukewarm oil." God's Messenger ﷺ replied: "God would never inflict me with such disease." He then added: "I ask that you do not remain here for the exception of my uncle al-'Abbāss who did not agree with this treatment." Later on, God's Messenger ﷺ kindly requested to move to the chamber of 'Aisha, God be pleased with her.

SECTION XIII
TREATMENT OF HEADACHE & HEMICRANIA

In his collection of prophetic sayings, Imam Ibn Māja cited a tradition in which God's Messenger ﷺ had applied henna to his scalp for his headache, and said: "God willing, it will help." Although there are some questions about the authority of the chain of narrators of the above tradition, nevertheless, God willing, we shall later on in this section discuss some of the benefits of henna in relationship to headache.

Common headache is caused by an imbalance of temperaments, and it is a disorder of humors that accompanies almost every illness. Typical headache (Arb. *sudā'*) can be either massive or partial. When it is periodical and limited to one side of the head, it is called migraine headache or hemicrania (Arb. *shaqīqa*), and when it spreads throughout the entire head, it is called in Arabic *baidha*; *khawtha* or helmet. When pain affects the back of the head it is called cephalalgia, and there are many varieties of headache with as many causes.

[1] Kamala: A powder obtained from the coating of the seed pods of the Kamala tree (*malotus philippinensis*); or from a similar genus family as the Ceylon cornel tree.

Generally speaking, headache is due to heat and fever in the head because of accumulation of vapors seeking a way out, and in the absence of such exit, they cause intense splitting headache. The same thing may happen to a pot, for example, when its contents are heated and need to expand. When such vapors spread throughout the head and expand uncontrollably, they cause increase in the amount of fluid in the cranium, swelling of the membrane of the head, and when they do not break up, they cause a type of headache that is called delirium (Arb. *sidr*). Hence, head fever, even without swelling, sometimes produces uncontrollable emotions, restlessness, narrow-mindedness, and confused speech, otherwise known as false delirium.

1. Types of Headache

There are several types of headaches. Four of them are due to imbalance of the four humors; the fifth type of headache is due to ulcers of the stomach that cause headache via the vagus nerve connecting the brain and the stomach; the sixth is due to putrefied gastric gases that rise to the head; the seventh is due to swelling in the gastric artery; the eight is due overeating, and when part of the food is digested and travels to the intestines, the balance of food that does not digest causes headache and heaviness; the ninth type of headache occurs following sexual intercourse due to excess heat; the tenth type of headache is caused by vomiting or purgation due to either excess dryness or moisture in the stomach; the eleventh type of headache is due to extended exposure to the sun or high temperature; the twelfth type of headache is caused by cold temperature and condensation of vapors in the head; the thirteenth type of headache is caused by absence of sleep (*insomnia*), or staying up prolonged hours at night; the fourteenth type of headache is due to putting pressure on one's head, carrying a heavy object on it, or injuring it; the fifteenth type of headache is due to excessive talking, thus weakening the strength of one's brain; the sixteenth type of headache is due to attenuating physical exercises and exhaustion; the seventeenth type of headache is due to depression, emotional stress, and prurient thoughts; the eighteenth type of headache is due to hunger, whereby vapors rise to the head and cause pain; the nineteenth type of headache is caused by swelling in the brain membrane, whereby one may feel as though his head is cracking or being hit by a hammer; the twentieth type of headache is due to high fever or to a serious underlying disease — God knows best.

2. Cause of Migraine Headache

Migraine headache or hemicrania is caused by obstruction of the blood vessels in the brain that either develops therein or rises to it. Such obstruction is due to foreign matters which are carried in the bloodstream and can be either corrupt air bubbles or vapors, or caused by dominating humors or excess cold or heat in the humors (*akhlãt*). The particular symptoms of a migraine headache are an abnormally fast beating of the blood vessels, or an arterial pressure. Placing a bandage around the head will quell the pain. In his book "Medicine of the Prophet", Abu Na'ïm narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ sometimes suffered from migraine headache that kept him home for a day or two. Ibn 'Abbãss said that God's Messenger ﷺ once gave a sermon wearing a headband. In general, tying a headband around one's head reduces the intensity of a migraine headache (*shaqïqa*) as well as other types of headache.

3. Treatment of Headache

Each headache is treated in accordance with its particular type and cause. Sometimes headache can be treated by purgation or inducing vomiting, and sometimes it can be treated by simple rest, quietness, and calm. Other types are treated by compression with a headband, or by applying cold pads or sometimes even hot pads, or by avoiding noxious noises or strenuous exercise.

Once the medical cause of headache is properly diagnosed, one may understand that the treatment used by God's Messenger ﷺ, as cited in the above prophetic tradition of applying henna to the scalp, was a partial or limited remedy for headache. This treatment is particularly functional in an extremely hot climate, such as that of the Arabian peninsula, for example. Hence, when headache is not caused by a harmful matter that requires purgation, then applying a decoction of henna to the surface of the scalp may be beneficial. In treating headache, henna also can be applied as poultice by grinding it and mixing its powder with vinegar. This will quell the pain and calm the nerves. The benefits of such application are not limited to the treatment of headache and is helpful for almost any pain of the limbs and will effect muscle tautness. Using henna poultices as a bandage around an area swollen from heat or from inflamed body tissue will soothe the inflamed area. It is reported in sahïh Bukhãri and in the traditions of Abu-Dãwoud that whenever someone complained to God's Messenger ﷺ about headache, he prescribed cupping, and whenever someone complained to him about foot pain, he

prescribed tinging his feet in henna. Imam al-Tirmithi narrated in his sahīh that Salma Um Rãfi' said: "Whenever God's Messenger ﷺ complained of a sore or headache, he applied henna to it."

4. Nature of Henna

Henna is cold in the first degree and dry in the second. The medicinal properties and potency of the henna tree and its branches comprise: (1) a dissolving factor of the flaccidity of an organ, which characteristic comes from a balancing moisture it contains; and (2) it contains a costive characteristic of a cold earth substance. Some of the benefits of Henna (Arb. *hinnã'*)[1] include treatment of burns, congruity with the nerves when used in poultices, and is used for the treatment of ulcers of the mouth, stomatitis, burns and hot swellings. Applying a decoction of henna to cuts has the same medicinal effects as those of the dragon's-blood tree[2]. Imam al-Tirmithi and Imam al-Baihaqi reported in their sahīh that Um Salma said: "God's Messenger ﷺ never suffered from a wound or a thorn without applying henna to it." Applying a decoction made of henna and rose balm mixed with melted candlelight wax also helps in the treatment of pleurisy. Henna also helps in the treatment of smallpox in its early stages. This is done by tinging the bottom of the child's feet with henna, and this will prevent its progression to his eyes. This treatment is well known fact and a most common treatment in the case of smallpox. When blossoms of henna are placed in a woolen garment, they perfume it and prevent moths. When henna leaves are soaked in fresh water then squeezed and the infusion is drunk, 20 drachms mixed with 10 drachms of sugar, taken daily for forty days, or cooking a lamb's meat with it and using it in one's diet for such period, it helps in the treatment of leprosy in its early stages. Henna balm also benefits in the treatment of the cracking of nails. This is done by drinking the water of soaked henna leaves for ten days. Henna paste also helps in the upkeep of healthy nails and beautifies them. Mixing henna powder with purified ghee also helps hot swellings that produce yellow puss when used as poultice, and is a treatment for scabies, itch and mange. Henna also helps hair growth, increases youthfulness, benefits one's vision, augment sexual drive, and is useful for the treatment of blisters, pimples, and skin pustules between the legs. On this subject, it is related

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[1] Arb. Al-Hinnã': *Lawsonia*. Also used to treat mortification of the flesh; Alcana, Camphire.

[2] **1.** Dragon's-blood tree (*Dracaena draco*) a native of the Canary Islands; any of the genus (*Dracaena*) of the agave family. **2.** Arb. *dam al-akhawain; Dark*-red, resinous substance derived from the dragon tree.

in *sahīh* Bukhāri that a man complained to God's Messenger ﷺ about pain in the legs, and he said: "Dye them with henna." Abu Dāwoud narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "There is no plant dearer to Allah than the henna plant."

SECTION XIV
FEEDING THE PATIENT

Imam al-Tirmithi in his *jāmi'* and Imam Ibn Māja in his *sunan* reported that 'Uqba bin 'Āmir al-Juhni narrated a prophetic tradition in which God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Do not impose food or drink upon your patients for God Almighty feeds them and gives them their drink."

Some honorable physicians noted that this prophetic tradition is the epitome of the treatment of diseases. Its benefits are many, and it connotes divine guidance for all doctors as well as for those caring for their patients. In fact, when the patient develops intolerance for food or refuses to eat or drink, it means that his nature is engaged in fighting the disease, and indicates loss of appetite, weakness of his faculties, or decline of his natural dispositions. Whatever may be the cause, food or drink must not be forced upon the patient. When the patient feels hungry, it means that his body is calling for nutrients his faculties are unable to supply, or that the previous measure of nutrients he had is already absorbed or digested. Calling for such needed nutrients, the furthest limbs enjoin upon the nether limbs, creating a tension in the stomach which in turn develops the craving for food. Otherwise, during a disease, one's faculties will be occupied in the maturation, processing, and elimination of unwanted substances. Hence, forcing food or drink upon the patient in that case will occupy the stomach in digesting the new food, and therefore interrupt the natural process of eliminating the disease. Such effects are particularly stronger during the weakness of his faculties, or during the crisis of an illness which may lead to complications accompanied with profuse sweating and dropping of temperature (Arb. *buhrān*). In fact, under such circumstances, the patient may only be given a basic nutritional diet that does not upset his digestive system, and that will assist him to preserve his strength and combat the disease.

Hence, at the time of such crises, the patient may be given necessary restorative nutrients and drinks to stimulate his stamina and balance his temperaments, such as syrup of aromatic nymph

(*nymphaea odorata*), apple juice, syrup of roses, and the like limited intake of liquids. As for his meals, he may have a well prepared and pleasing chicken soup. To refresh his spirit, the patient also requires fragrant surroundings, and must receive encouragement and only hear good news, for a true physician is a servant and benefactor of nature, not its opponent.

One also must know that healthy blood carries the required nutrients and cell-building material for the body, while phlegm is unripe blood. When there is excess phlegm in the body, and in a compassionate gesture, nature will assist in the maturation of such phlegm and turns it into blood to temporarily supplement the body's needs. In fact, nature is the force which is entitled by the divine decree to regulate the body's functions, and to preserve its health during the lifetime of the human being.

The patient rarely needs to be fed by force, except when he is unconscious or deranged. In this sense, the prophetic saying: "Do not impose food or drink upon your patients for God Almighty feeds them and gives them their drink" deals with the general physical condition and not the aberrant. The meaning of the above prophetic saying is that the patient may survive several days without intake of food or drink, a condition which a healthy person may not be able to sustain without weakening of his faculties. The prophetic saying of God's Messenger ﷺ "...for God Almighty feeds them and gives them their drink" conveys a subtle meaning only physicians who pay attention to the true state of the heart and spiritual realities can fathom. In their case, they may recognize the functions of the body and the soul and nature's interactive role therein. Therefore, and by way of alluding to it, we merely say that when one's mind is occupied in thinking about his beloved, or when one is concerned or afraid, he may decline food or drink and may feel no hunger, thirst, cold, or heat. Instead, his senses become caught in his pursuit to a degree that he may even not feel a blow, a cut or an excruciating pain. No doubt, everyone has experienced a degree of such kind of oblivion. Such invasion clouds one's thoughts and defeats the pain of hunger and thirst. When thoughts are pleasing, they substitute for nutrients, and one's body becomes satiated and refreshed, and his energies heighten. Blood will flow readily in his heart and it will show like radiance on his face, for happiness thins the blood, increases its flow in the arteries and quenches their thirst. In that case, happiness becomes the primary nutrient; the body will love such indulgence and becomes temporarily affianced in exchange for conventional nutrients.

Spiritual Nourishment

When nature (*tabi'a*) captures its preference, or attains higher realms, its pleasure far exceeds what is inferior and secondary. Hence is the meaning of God's Messenger's saying: "I dwell with my Lord, and He gives me my food and drink." On the other hand, when the caller provokes despondency, sorrow, or pain, here again, nature becomes preoccupied in fighting, opposing, and repelling the intruder. Also in this case, such struggle takes precedence over asking for food. Should one win the battle, the body then feels anew and refreshed and looks back for what it missed of essentially needed nutrients. However, if the battle is forfeited to one's enemy, he loses his strength and becomes resigned. Moreover, in the case of a competition, one's strength fluctuates. In essence, such inner battle is like that of a fight between two enemies. The winner is the victorious one, and the loser will either be killed or captured. Like that, a sick person receives from God Almighty a helping hand which will entitle him to benefit from his nearness to his Lord. In fact, God's dependents and servants are closer to their Lord when their hearts are broken, and this will inherit them accession to the Divine Mercy and Compassion. Should the patient be pious and devout, then such spiritual nourishment will permeate his heart, revitalize his nature (*tabi'a*), and strengthen his body. Of course, such spiritual nourishment has far greater profundity and significance for one's body than food and water. The stronger one's faith, love for his Lord, joy and gratification to be in His presence—the more ardent and fervent his yearning to meet his Lord—the stronger becomes his certitude (*yaqin*), contentment, satisfaction with his Lord's will, and recognition of His countless favors. Such renewed spiritual strength compensates immeasurably for the patient's needs, while the knowledge of a secular physician cannot attain such level of understanding, describe such wonder, or fathom such state of purity and exaltedness because of a cloudiness that overshadows his brain and spirit, and his lack of faith. To understand this phenomenon, one can ponder the state of an art enthusiast who loves paintings and sculptures, and how his heart is satiated with such state of near-worship and admiration. In fact, when one is utterly enthralled in such fondness for paintings, status, titles, money, knowledge, or love for the world, through his fixed concentration he can unfold wonders and blossom with constant discoveries about himself as well as others.

It is narrated in the sahih that God's Messenger ﷺ used to carry himself through numbered days of continuous and

uninterrupted fast, though he forbade his companions to do so. When asked about it, he replied: "I am not like any of you, I remain in my Lord's presence Who gives me my food and drink." Of course, such Divine nourishment is not taken orally, otherwise there will be no difference between fasting or eating, and in such a case, he would not be fasting. It also means that he is endowed with exceptional favors that make him capable of what they are not suited to administer. Otherwise, if he ate and drank through the mouth, he would not have said: "I am not like any of you (*hai'a*)". A bedridden patient who lacks such spiritual nourishment for his soul and heart, as well as its role in affecting a cure for his illness and revitalizing his nature, and confronted with the ineffectiveness of medicine his body is earnestly trying to digest, will understand what is said hereinabove — God is the best promoter of understanding.

SECTION XV
INFLAMMATION OF THE THROAT

It is narrated in the *sahïh* that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Some of your best medicines are found in cupping and in Indian aloe[1], and do not make your children hurt by pressing their uvula when they suffer from inflammation of the throat."[2] In another tradition narrated by Jãbir bin 'Abdullãh, it is related that God's Messenger ﷺ came to 'Aisha, God be pleased with her, and found her caring for a child whose nose was bleeding. He asked: "What is this?" A visiting woman replied: "Perhaps he has throat inflammation (*'uthra*), or a headache!" God's Messenger ﷺ replied: "Do not kill your children. When your child suffers from throat inflammation or headache, use Indian aloe, treated in fresh water and make the child sniff it."[3] 'Aisha immediately called for the medicine, applied it, and the child recovered.

In his opinion, Abu 'Ubaida explained that *'uthra* develops from an inflammation of the throat, or from trachea boils caused by the blood humor. When treated, one may have to keep quiet for a short while, and he will be excused for not talking. Others explain that *'uthra* is an ulcer that originates in an inflammation between the ear and the throat, and mostly affects children. The benefits

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[1] Indian aloe: (A. *Qust bahri*); genus liliaceous plant; Aloeswood. Also see Pleurisy; Section XI.

[2] Arabic> 'Uthra: (A. < 'uthur: *excuse*); throat inflammation; tonsil disease; swelling of the uvula.

[3] Arabic> *Su'üt.*

of sniffing water-treated Indian aloe powder is that *'uthra* originates in blood which is glutted with excess phlegm, and Indian aloe helps to dry the uvula and permits stretching it back to its place. The symptoms of *'uthra* also include sore and swollen uvula and tonsils, elongation and dryness of the uvula, hoarseness, and sometimes a catarrhous condition contaminating the blood with phlegm.

Occasionally, hot diseases can be treated with hot medicines. Avicenna in his "Canon of Medicine" speaks of the treatment of the inflammation and elongation of the uvula (*uvulaptosis*), by making the patient sniff a powdered compound of alum,[1] seeds of Myrrh (*commiphora myrrha*) and Indian aloe. The Indian aloe (*see foot note 1*) required for this treatment is the type that produces white blossoms and tastes sweet. Previously, people used to treat throat inflammation and tonsillitis by pressing the uvula. God's Messenger ﷺ instructed them against it, and taught them about this remedy. *Su'ūt* (A) is any medicine which is sniffed through the nose, sometimes involving simple medicines or compound ones. The mixture is ground to fine powder, sifted, and moistened lightly and then left to dry. When needed, such mixture is dissolved in water and inhaled through the nose. The patient must lie on his back with his head stretched backward with the help of a pillow under his shoulders to allow the snuff to directly reach his brain, thus expelling the disease by sneezing. Ibn 'Abbāss narrated that occasionally, God's Messenger ﷺ used medicinal snuff and recommended it for the treatment of various illnesses.

SECTION XVI
ENLARGEMENT OF THE HEART

1. THE BENEFIT OF DATES

Mujāhid narrated in sunan Abu Dāwoud that Sa'īd said: "God's Messenger ﷺ visited me during a sickness I had, he placed his hand between my nipples, and I felt its cool blessings in the organs that lie within the chest wall. He then commented: 'You are suffering from enlargement of the heart (Arb. *maf'oud*). Call for al-Hārith bin Kaladah. He practices medicine. Ask him to take seven dried Medina dates (*'ajwa*), crush them with their seeds to form a medicinal compound, and let him massage your chest with their paste."

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[1] Arb. *shabb Yamāni* > used as a blood clotting agent for nose bleeding and hemorrhaging.

Medina dates have extraordinarily rich medicinal properties,[1] and the Prophet's prescription of seven dates for this particular treatment has subtle spiritual value that can only be understood through faith. It is related in the two books of correct Prophetic traditions (*sahīh*), that the father of Sa'ad bin Abi Waqqāss reported God's Messenger ﷺ as saying: "Whoever takes seven dates of the plantation of 'Āliya for his morning breakfast will suffer from neither poison nor witchcraft for that day." (*Bukhāri*)

Dates are hot in the second degree and dry in the first. Some *hakīms* consider dates to be moist. Dates are an excellent nutritional food and particularly for those who are accustomed to them in their basic diet such as the dwellers of Medina, among others. Dates provide necessary dietary supplements in cold climates though they are more beneficial for the dwellers of hot climates. The stomachs of the dwellers of cold climates are hot, and the stomachs of the dwellers of hot climates are cold. This explains why the dwellers of the Arabian peninsula, Yemen, Ta'if and neighboring climates of hot climate, for example, tolerate excess hot foods such as honey and dates, and why they relish hot condiments and spices in their meals, adding to their food nearly ten times the amount customarily used in countries of cold and moderate climates; and in comparison to the dwellers of cold climates, they eat hot peppers and ginger and snack on their by-products in the same way others eat sweets. In fact, such diet agrees with them because their stomachs remain cool while the heat of their bodies rises to the surface of their skin. This is similar to wells and natural springs, wherein the water is cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter. Similarly, one's stomach can digest coarse food in the winter it may not be able to burn up in the summer.

Hence, the dwellers of Medina, for example, depend greatly on dates for food in the same way others may depend on wheat. From dates, they draw their needed energies and basic supplements. Medina's dates of the date palms (*phoenix dacti lifera*) of 'Āliya are the best of varieties, and they are blackish in color, big, sweet and fleshy. They also have gained the blessedness of being planted by God's Messenger ﷺ himself. Dates are considered food, medicine,

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[1] Dates are rich in minerals and vitamins A, B, and D. Nutritional values in dried dates can reach near 85% to include: 78.0% hydrocarbon, 2.5% protein, 3.0% glycerides, and 1.5% minerals. Dates are rich in alkaline mineral salt that balance the acidity of meat, eggs, and bread. The nutritional components in moist dates are typically as follows: 30% water, 65% sugar, 2% protein, and 1% gelatin. Nutritional values of its sugar are double those of regular sugar.

as well as fruit. They agree with most people, increase sexual strength, and produce no harmful or indigestible waste matters as do several fruits. Instead, for a frequent user, dates prevent putrescence of humors (*akhlāt*) and their corruption.

Perhaps this prophetic saying deals particularly with the dwellers of Medina and their neighbors. Hence, it is possible that the agricultural products of each land provide critical medicine for its own dwellers. Should the same plant be sown in another area, it may not produce the same aforementioned nutritional values or medicinal effects. This will be due to the type of earth, water and air. In fact, there are as many varieties of soils as there are people, and each soil produces the necessary nutritional food needed by its people. Several types of plants may be edible in some lands while they are considered poisonous in others, or perhaps some plants may be medicine for some people yet food for others.

2. Spiritual Significance of The Seven Dates

As for the spiritual significance of the seven dates indicated in the prophetic saying, this number came to pass by the Divine Decree (*qadar*) prior to the coming into existence of God's creation. The number seven then was instituted by the Divine Law (*Sharī'a*). In fact, everything is created in septuple. Allah the Magnificent created the seven heavens having seven layers each; the two earths in seven formations; completed the creation of the human being in seven stages (*atwār*); mandated that His worshipers should circumambulate the holy house (*Ka'aba*) seven times; encompass the two hills of *Safa* and *Marwa* seven times; pelt the accursed one at Mina seven times, with seven stones each; and the glorifications of the Divine Name during the two Muslim festivals (*'Eid*) seven times each. God's Messenger ﷺ spoke concerning urging one's children to observe their regular prayers at the age of seven. In the case of divorce, God's Messenger ﷺ also instituted that a child may choose between his father and mother when he reaches seven years of age. In a subsequent prophetic tradition, he adjudicated that the child's father is more suitable to attend to his needs, though in another specific case, he gave such right to the mother. During his last illness, God's Messenger ﷺ asked his companions to pour seven waterskins of cold water over his head. God Almighty commanded the violent windstorm that destroyed the accursed people of Sodom to strike unrelentingly for seven consecutive days and nights as a punishment that culminated in their obliteration. The Messenger ﷺ prayed to God Almighty to help him deliver the message to his people with seven blessings like those endowed

upon Joseph. Then came the Divine parable in the Holy Qur'an, whereby Allah will multiply the reward of charity seven-hundred fold. He says: ❮ The parable of those who spend their substance in the way of Allah is that of a grain of corn: it grows seven ears, and each ear has one hundred grains. Indeed, Allah increases manifold the reward of whom He pleases; and Allah cares for all, and knows everything. ❯ (*Qur'an 2:261*) Also during the time of God's prophet Joseph, upon whom be peace, the king of Egypt saw in his dream seven ears of corn, and through the interpretation of Joseph while in his prison, the Egyptians planted for seven years. God's Messenger ﷺ foretold that seventy thousand of his followers will enter paradise without reckoning. Therefore, there is no doubt that the number seven has a notable spiritual significance that is not met in other numbers. The same importance of the number seven is also found in Muslims' two supererogatory night prayers of *shafa'* and *witr*.

Similar prominent regards for the cardinal number seven also can be found in Greek philosophy and medicinal treaties. Hippocrate outlined in his teachings that everything in this universe has seven sides to it (*septilateral*). There are seven planets in this solar system, seven days in a week, seven stages in the lifetime of the human being, that is: (1) infancy; (2) childhood; (3) teenage; (4) adolescence; (5) middle age; (6) old age; and (7) decrepitude that concludes one's life in this world. God knows best about the true meaning, purpose, decree and wisdom He intended in making the number seven a cardinal number, and whether the above interpretation fully explains the meaning of the seven dates, the city of Medina, and the relationship between them and their prevention of witchcraft and poison as mentioned in God's Messenger's saying. Nevertheless, had the same opinion or medicine been prescribed by Hippocrate or Galen among other renowned physicians, most likely, physicians from all over the world would have acclaimed such discovery and prescribed the same, though their opinions would have been based on conjuncture, and a sense of intelligence. On the other hand, the blessed words of God's Messenger ﷺ are spoken with knowledge, faith and certitude, and were revealed through Divine inspiration, and they should be more worthy of pursuit, study, acceptance and trust. However, regarding the treatment of cold poisons, there are some generally accepted procedures and antidotes used in their treatment, and in other particular cases, there are other antidotal properties one can find in many plants, precious stones, onyx, garnet, crystal, or turquoise, and at other times — God knows best.

3. Faith: An Antidote

In further studying the above prophetic tradition: "Whoever takes seven dates of the plantation of 'Āliya for his morning breakfast will suffer from neither poison nor witchcraft for that day," it is possible that Medina dates in particular may prove to have the needed antidote that works against an evil spell, or they may possess the required curative to counteract specific kinds of cold poisons. In the latter case, the soil, water and air of the blessed city of God's Messenger ﷺ will provide the answer. Nevertheless, there is a prerequisite condition for recovering from ills and afflictions that befall the human being—and that is the role of faith in promoting healing. Moreover, in order for a sick person to benefit from a medicine, he must first accept it and trust in its effectiveness in curing his disease. Hence, one's 'nature' (*ṯabī'a*) will value such merits and use the provided medicine to help drive away the illness. In fact, several approaches to successful treatment rely strongly on the patient's trust, perfect consent, and his genuine acceptance of the remedy. Such miraculous phenomena are even common, for under the correct psychological conditions, 'nature' will strongly adhere to the medicine, and the soul will embrace it with joy, hence authenticating nature's functions and supremacy, stimulating one's natural stamina, and impelling one's innate heat (Arb. *ḫãar gharīzī*), or natural antibodies to produce the needed lymphocytes, and other natural antibiotics that will inhibit the growth of harmful organisms and expel the poison.

By contrast, often the 'right medicine' may be ineffective when the patient has unfounded reservations, doubt, and lack of faith in its restorative effects, thus causing 'nature' to take exception, and act with indifference towards the cure. In such case, no medicine will be of benefit. Such example also can be found in the most valuable medicine ever, the finest remedy for the hearts, bodies and souls, and the most auspicious treatment leading to one's benefits in this world and in the hereafter, namely the holy Qur'an, which is the cure for every illness. Unless the hearts believe in it, they will not benefit from it. Instead, it will increase their afflictions, and intensify their illnesses. On the other hand, there is no cure that brings about an immutable, complete, and permanent recovery better than the Qur'an, for in its Divine wisdom, knowledge and light are the best diet, and the best cure for every disease. Despite that, the majority of hearts turn away from it; lack true faith in its medicine for the body, mind and soul; and point to the opposite path in seeking a cure for their illnesses. Their remedies are of course the compound medicines they discovered through

trial and error, and which they are accustomed to using by habit. In fact, rather than rising to higher realms and receiving the real medicine, people of such hearts have stronger reliance upon the created functions and effectiveness of 'nature' in overcoming their illnesses. Such dependency grew through habit, a common tendency to seek prevailing methods when one's spiritual inclinations are deficient. Thus, common diseases and chronic illnesses come to prevail over people's minds, bodies, and hearts. Both the patient and the doctors become dependent on such cures, and develop a heartfelt sensitivity and concern for their own kind instead of revering the medicine of the holy Qur'an and the traditional medicine of God's Messenger ﷺ. The faith, respect, spirit, and positive thinking they owe to the teachings of their learned shaikhs and scholars is befuddled by their new trust, respect, and faith in the secular arts and applied science rather than the words of their Creator and the teachings of His Messenger ﷺ. As a result, common illnesses, new diseases, and the most serious disease of all, i.e., the Heart acquire new dimensions, develop additional complications, bring people to their knees and to dependency on such treatments, and keep the medical minds busy researching the cause, and experimenting at synthesizing a cure. In fact, the more they treat compound diseases with complex synthetic so called 'remedies,' the further the illnesses will intensify and develop further complications, and thus far, the facts have proven so—God knows best.

A poet once said:

What a wonder! And of wonders there are plenty
The medicine is nearby, yet one does not reach for it.
Just like a caravan whose camels are thirsty,
though water is carried on their backs aplenty.

SECTION XVII
BALANCING ONE'S DIET AS A PRIMARY PREVENTIVE MEDICINE

It is related in the two correct prophetic traditions (*Bukhāri and Muslim*) that 'Abdullāh bin Ja'afar said: "I saw God's Messenger ﷺ eating fresh ripe dates with cucumber."

THE BENEFITS OF EATING FRESH DATES AND CUCUMBERS

It is essential to maintain good health by controlling one's diet and balancing one's intake of food and fruits. Creating equilibrium

of food will dispel any harm they may contain, and optimize their benefits. Fresh ripe dates (Arb. *raṯib*) are hot and moist in the second degree. They relieve symptoms of bad temperament of the stomach caused by low caloric value in one's diet, and relieve the condition of cold-natured substances in the stomach. They also agree with the stomach, relieve intestinal malabsorption and correct weakness of digestion, as well as they rectify hot constitution of the body when combined with an oxymel[1] or with bitter pomegranate. However, ripe dates deteriorate rapidly. Fresh ripe dates also increase male's seminal fluid and sexual power, though eating excess ripe dates will agitate the blood, develop headache, obstruct blood vessels, develop ache of the bladder, increase thirst, and damage one's teeth. On the other hand, cucumbers are cold and moist in the second degree. They quench the thirst and stimulate one's energies even by their fragrant smell. They cool bad temperament of the stomach, balance gastrointestinal functions, and abate fever. When cucumber seeds are dried, ground, sifted and then emulsified, drinking such emulsion will quench the thirst, act as a diuretic, and relieve ache of the bladder, while brushing one's teeth with ground dried cucumber seeds whitens the teeth, among other benefits.

Altogether, fresh ripe dates are hot and cucumbers are cold. Each one of them will compensate for the other, balance the body's natural defences, and smooth the digestive process. The bad effects of dates can also be neutralized by eating almond and poppy seeds. In fact, countering each bellicose substance with its opposite will balance it, nullify its malignancy, and bring forth its benefits. This is in essence the basis of the natural law of opposites, and this is the basis of medical treatment, the foundation of preserving a healthy and strong body, and moreover, it is the core of medical science. It is narrated in the traditions that 'Aisha, God be pleased with her, said: "They nourished me with every type of food to gain weight, yet I did not put on any. They then added cucumber and fresh dates to my diet and that did it." Thus, cold is treated with hot, hot with cold, moist with dry, and dry with moist. This will expel their harm and balance their effects. Similar to this theory is the prophetic guidance of mixing *senna* together with ghee and honey (*sanūt*) as a natural mild laxative, for the *sanūt*[2] balances the effects of senna leaves. All praises be to Allah, and may He shower His utmost blessings upon His Messenger ﷺ who was sent to help rectify the conditions of the hearts, give guidance

[1] Oxymel: An Eastern preparation made of five parts of honey to one part vinegar.
[2] Cf. X Dryness of Temperaments

on maintaining good health, and to benefit everyone concerning their welfare in this world and in the hereafter.

SECTION XVIII
IMPOSITION OF ABSTINENCE FROM FOOD

Medicine implies two things: (1) abstinence from taking on harmful substances; and (2) protecting the constitution of one's body through observing a healthy diet to prevent hindrance of its natural functions. Once the humors reach putrefaction, there comes the need to induce the pertinent mode of purgation. Hence, the core of medical practice is based upon these three principles. There are two kinds O abstinence (Arb. *ḫimya*): (1) one that prevents the disease; and (2) the second that halts its effects and allows the body to expel it. The first kind of abstinence is the preventive medicine that constitutes the diet of a healthy person, and the second is the basic necessary diet for a sick person. Once observed, it causes the disease to stand still and helps one's faculties to expel it. The source of Divine guidance on imposition of abstinence from food comes from the holy Qur'an, wherein God Almighty says: ❮ If you are ill, or on a journey, or if one of you comes from offices of nature, or if you have been in contact with women and find no water for washing your whole body, then use a clean surface...❯ (*Qur'an 4:43*) Hence, permission is given to a sick person to avoid the use of water when its use externally is harmful. Again, this guidance indicates the need for abstinence to alleviate questionable health complications, thus instituting the basic rule of medical treatment.

Ibn Mãja in his collection of prophetic traditions (*sunan Ibn Mãja*) narrates that Um al-Mun<u>th</u>ir Bint Qays al-An<u>s</u>ãriyyah said: "God's Messenger ﷺ entered my tent and with him came 'Ali who was recuperating (*nãqih*) from an illness. We had there a palm tree with clusters of dates hanging from it. God's Messenger ﷺ stood eating from it, and 'Ali followed suit. God's Messenger ﷺ addressed 'Ali by saying: 'Gently, gently, you are still convalescing.' 'Ali stopped, and I prepared for him a dish of Swisschard beets[1] cooked with barley. God's Messenger ﷺ then said to 'Ali: 'Eat this food, for it is more suitable for you.' "

We also find in the collection of traditions of Ibn Mãja that <u>S</u>uhayb said: "I once came to visit God's Messenger ﷺ who was then eating bread and dates. He said to me: 'Come and eat.' So

[1] Arb. *silq*; L. Beta vulgaris.

I sat down and began by eating some dates. God's Messenger ﷺ said to me: 'Do you eat dates when you suffer from conjunctivitis'"[1] I replied: 'O God's Messenger I chew it on the other side!' Hearing that, God's Messenger ﷺ smiled."

In another prophetic tradition, God's Messenger ﷺ said: "When Allah loves a servant, He protects him against the allurements of this world, just like one of you ceases not to protect his patient from food and drink." As for the common sayings: "Imposing abstinence from food and drink is the best medicine;" "The stomach is the abode of every disease;" and "Treat each person with what his body is used to;" all theses dictums are the saying of the physician of the Arabs, al-Hãrith bin Kaladah, and it is incorrect to attribute them to God's Messenger ﷺ. Several scholars agree on this opinion. However, it is related that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "The stomach is the central basin of the body, and the veins are connected to it. When the stomach is healthy, it passes on its condition to the veins, and in turn, the veins will circulate the same, and when the stomach is putrescent, the veins will absorb such putrescence and issue the same."

Al-H̱ãrith bin Kaladah used to say: "Abstinence is the epitome of medicine." According to the Arabs then, abstinence (*ẖimya*) meant adherence to a diet of preventive medicine to maintain good health. They also contended that a dietary *ẖimya* for a healthy person has the same significance as the recovery period (*naqãha*) needed by a convalescing person; and indulging in food by a healthy person is like the putrefaction of humors (*ak̲h̲lãt̲*) in a sick person. Of course, imposing abstinence from harmful elements for a sick person, and limiting his intake of food when convalescing is most beneficial for his recovery. During such period, the constitution of one's body is still recuperating and his digestive system is weak. His health then is most susceptible to degeneration, and he risks suffering from serious relapse. Such recurrence can be worse than the original affliction and more critical to one's health.

You should also know that God's Messenger ﷺ gave 'Ali, God bless his countenance, the best medical advice when he forbade him of eating fresh ripe date while convalescing. In his case, fresh ripe dates which people at that time hung in their homes in clusters, in addition to other types of fruits are difficult to digest when one's constitution is weak, and when 'nature' cannot dispose of it easily because it is still busy in expelling the disease. This is particularly true regarding certain types of dates that are heavy

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[1] Optholmia; conjunctivitis; Arb. *Ramad*.

on the stomach. Hence, eating them during recovery brings more harm than benefit to the patient. In this case, what remains of the disease may either stagnate in the body or perhaps progress further. When Um al-Munthir presented 'Ali with the dish of Swisschard beets cooked with barley, God's Messenger ﷺ invited him to eat from it, for this type of food is healthier for a recovering patient. The water with which the barley is cooked cools the stomach, acts as a cathartic and an aperient and provides needed nutrients for the patient. Such meal is particularly beneficial when the barley is cooked with the stalks and leaves of Swisschard beets. This type of dish also provides the best nourishment for a delicate stomach, and causes no putrefaction of the humors.

Zaid bin Aslam narrated that Omar bin al-Khattāb, God be pleased with him, once suffered from a high fever. He was put on a strict diet and was asked to largely abstain from any food and drink. During his illness, and out of hunger, Omar would sometimes suck on a date pit. In conclusion, dietary abstinence (*himya*) from food for a sick person during the early stages of his illness is the best medicine before taking medicine, and when medicine is essential to combat the disease, abstinence then prevents complications and helps the body to control the spread of the disease.

SECTION XIX
CRAVINGS OF THE SICK PERSON

If the patient, the convalescing person or even a healthy person develops a strong desire for a specific food or drink he is not allowed to have, and should his craving for it intensify, then there will be no harm in giving him a small portion his system can digest. Such portion does not harm him, and can possibly benefit him, for his natural appetency conveys that the constitution of his body will receive what the heart craves with acceptance and liking, and such positive attitude will neutralize and overcome any possible harm a small portion carries. In fact, such intake of food or drink is more beneficial for the body than to eat or drink what one dislikes. This explains why God's Messenger ﷺ consented that Suhayb may eat few fresh dates (*ratib*) when he was suffering from conjunctivitis. He knew that they will cause him no harm. In a similar narration, it is related that 'Ali, God bless his countenance, visited God's Messenger ﷺ who asked him: "What do you desire?" 'Ali replied: "Fresh dates." God's Messenger

ﷺ in his deep love and compassion for his blessed companions smiled while tossing one date at 'Ali who received it with much gratitude. A moment later, God's Messenger ﷺ tossed another date, then a third, and he continued like that until 'Ali ate seven of them. God's Messenger ﷺ then said: "O 'Ali, that is enough for you!" In another narration reported by Ibn Māja, it is related that God's Messenger ﷺ while visiting a sick man, asked him: "Do you desire anything?" The sick man replied: "Some whole-wheat bread." God's Messenger ﷺ then turned to his companions and said: "If any of you has whole-wheat bread at home, send some to your brother." He then added: "If your patient craves a particular food or drink, then give it to him." Certainly this prophetic guidance indicates a winsome medical vision that skilled physicians can understand.

In essence, when the patient eats something he likes out of true hunger and a natural appetite, it may be more beneficial for him than eating or drinking something he does not desire. Therefore, the body will digest with more ease something taken with appetence and when one's instinct calls for it — Allah knows best.

SECTION XX
TREATMENT OF OPHTHALMIA
(CONJUNCTIVITIS & OTHER EYE DISEASES)

We noted earlier how God's Messenger ﷺ disapproved of S̲uhayb's eating of dried dates (*tamr*) while suffering from inflammation of the eyes (*ophthalmitis*), and how he advised 'Ali against indulging in fresh ripe dates (*rat̲ib*) while recovering from conjunctivitis. On this subject, Abu Na'ïm narrated in his book, also known as Medicine of the Prophet (*at-Tibbu Nabawi*) that God's Messenger ﷺ would not approach any of his wives suffered from ophthalmia until she was cured.

Ophthalmia (Arb. *ramad*) is a severe inflammation of the conjunctiva, and it affects the outer membrane (*sclera*) that covers the eyeball with the exception of the cornea. Such inflammation is caused by the spillage of one of the humors. If it is caused by the blood humor, it will cause redness in the eye and swelling in the flesh layer, and if the yellow bile is the cause, it will produce burning sensation and pain in the eye. In the case of conjunctivitis, the swelling affects the outer membrane and can be caused by excess hot vapors that rise to the head. Some of such vapors will

rise suddenly to the conjunctiva, and sometimes can cause eye-stroke. Immediately, the body will provide an overflow of blood supply and antibodies to the eye area to counter the intruding cause. As a result, this may cause conjunctivitis, swelling and congestion of the veins.

1. General Effects of Corrupted Humors

Just like the rising of vapors from the earth (one being hot and dry and the second hot and moist), by their condensation and the suspension of tiny water droplets and ice crystals in the air, form clouds that obstruct our view of the skies, a similar phenomenon originates in the bottom of the stomach and rises to the esophagus and subsequently can obstruct or dim one's vision. This phenomenon also can produce several types of malfunctions and diseases in the body. If the body is able to dispose of such vapors or gases (which are travelling in the blood) through the nostrils, the body will react by releasing excess mucous through the nose (*rhinorrhea*) or common cold, or in the form of an inflammation of the mucous membrane (*catarrh*). Otherwise if the vapors lodge in the uvula and the nostrils, it will manifest as spasmodic suffocation, and if they lodge in the pleura, such gases may give rise to angioneurosis (Arb. *shawsa*). If the vapors settle in the lungs, they cause bronchitis. If they lodge in the heart, they can cause a heart attack. If they lodge in the eye, they produce ophthalmia (*conjunctivitis*). If they descend to the lower cavities of the body, they can cause lymphorea (Arb. *sayalãn*). If they lodge in the brain, they can cause temporary loss of memory (*amnesia*), and if the gases or vapors further condense and produce moisture in the brain, they can cause descending of superfluities from the brain into the lungs, create abnormal drowsiness (*lethargy*), or they can cause excessive sleeping (*dauernarkose*), and that is why sleep is moist and wakefulness is dry. If such concentration of gases settles in the head and does not find an escape, such vapors can cause headache and insomnia, and if they settle in one side of the head, they cause migraine headache (*hemicrania*). If they settle in the cerebellum or in the vertex, they cause an increase in the number of leukocytes in the blood (*leukosis*; Arb. *dã'ul-baidha*). On the other hand, if such condensation of gases cools, heats, or moistens the membrane that envelops the brain and then stimulates flatulency, or produces gases in the stomach and intestines, they cause sneezing (*apomyttosis*). If such vapors or gases further expand to arouse the phlegm moisture to the degree of saturating the antibodies, they will cause blackouts

and seizures (*apoplexia*). If such vapors or gases excite the black bile to the degree of blurring the homogeneity of air in the brain, they can cause anxiety, delusion, and doubt. If they reach the range of the nerves they can cause shrinking of cells, also known as pykno-epilepsy, or madness (Arb. *ṣar'a*). If the evaporation of gases settle in the brain and produce excess moisture in the phlegm humor, they can cause swelling of the nerve endings of the brain as well as deterioration of the brain cells, and this may further produce acute nervous disorder, cerebral palsy, or it can result in semiparalysis (*hemiplegia*). If the vapors or gases cause an inflammation of the meninges (*meningitis*) and affect the cerebrospinal fluid, it can cause pleurisy (Arb. *birsãm*), and when meningitis is associated with the lungs, such corruption can cause a cerebral disease (Arb. *sirsãm*).

What one has to recognize from this section is that suffering from conjunctivitis causes the body's humors and those of the head to become active and adulterated, and having sexual intercourse when suffering from conjunctivitis will irritate the symptoms and aggravate the condition, for sexual intercourse animates the entire body, nature, and soul. The body temperature will rise, the heat of excitement will accelerate to culminate in a climax, and the soul (*rüẖ*) will harmoniously thrust in their trail. In essence, sexual intercourse is the inaugural stage of affinity between the body, heart and soul, and life emerges from such junction to satiate the entire body, while the prospect of such excessive movement as a whole is for nature to secrete the necessary measure of semen at the height of the intercourse.

During sexual intercourse, the entire being is moving constantly — his body, nature, humors, soul, energies, and mind, and each movement further agitates the balance of humors (*a<u>kh</u>lãt*) and thins their consistency in order to ease their naturalness and flow to delicate parts of the body, and the eye is one of them. Hence, under the aphthous condition of conjunctivitis, the eye is even more vulnerable, and such excessive motion of the body during sexual intercourse is more deleterious for it. In this case, Hypocrite of Cos draws the parable of seasickness that appears to agitate the body during the motion of a boat.

Nevertheless, since nature hastens the purgation of harmful substances in one's body during an illness, and this will ultimately ease the balancing of humors, conjunctivitis provides ample benefits for one's body, including: (1) abstinence from harmful foods (*ẖimya*); (2) observing restricted dit; (3) purgation of harmful substances;

(4) cleansing the head and body of harmful waste material; and (5) desisting from supplying one's body and spirit with abusive qualities, including anger, worries, melancholy, brusque movements, and exerting strenuous labor. A skilled *hakim* once said: "Do not condemn conjunctivitis, for it removes the cause of blindness."

2. The Remedy of Conjunctivitis

There are several kinds of eye diseases, some of which necessitate consulting of specialized physicians today. However, as we stated several times in this book, one should not generalize what is particular to a certain person and place concerning the prophetic medicine, nor should he delimit what is general about them, otherwise, mistakes will no doubt crop up. Nevertheless, the general opinion of *ḫakīms* concerning the basic natural *tibb* remedy for conjunctivitis is rest, quietude, and refraining from rubbing the eye to abate the itching of the eyelid (for this will incur the activation of specific antibodies that will flow with great concentration towards the affected area as a natural defence mechanism). Such treatment may also be necessary with regard to several eye diseases, and even when applying other natural medicines. In fact, the eye is so sensitive that one should not unnecessarily touch it, and the remedy for eye diseases is to abstain from touching it."

Besides rest, when the cause of conjunctivitis is gas, *ḫakīms* also may recommend splashing the eye with cold water, since the disease is hot, and such heat can be abated with cold water. On the other hand, it is reported in the correct prophetic traditions that 'Abdullāh bin Mas'oud once said to his wife who was suffering from conjunctivitis: "Why don't you do what God's Messenger ﷺ recommended? This would have been better, and it would have healed faster. First splash cold water over your eyes and pray: 'O Lord of humankind, lift my adversity. Cure me of this disease, for Thou art the only One Who has a remedy for every disease. Lord, grant me an unmitigated recovery that does not know relapse.' " Thus we conclude this section on the prophetic guidance in the treatment of conjunctivitis— God knows best.

Section XXI
Treatment of Catalepsy

Abu 'Ubaida narrated in his collection of startling prophetic sayings (*gharīb-ul ḫadīth*) that Abu 'Uthmān al-Nahdi said: "A party of people drove by a tree and ate from its fruit. Suddenly

they froze, as if a glacial wind or a chilling current had stiffened their joints and limbs. God's Prophet ﷺ then said: 'Chill some water in waterskins and pour it over them between the two calls.' "

God's Messenger ﷺ in this prophetic guidance advised the people to chill water at night and to pour it over them at dawn between the first and the second call to prayer. A skilled *hakīm* commented on this prophetic guidance by saying: "This is the best of treatments for cataleptic rigidity (Arb. *jumda ākhitha* or *khidrān kulli*)." In fact, this is a type of seizure where one's consciousness and feeling seem to be temporarily lost, and is sometimes accompanied with muscle rigidity, whereby the person suddenly becomes motionless, senseless, or fixed. Such stiffness (Arb. *qasat*), is caused by the black bile bringing obstruction to the lower section of the brain, and also can be treated with an enema. The Arabic name for this disease is also known as *khidrān kulli* and means complete numbness of the body and deprivation of sensation. The above treatment also may be peculiar to the dwellers of the Arabian peninsula and countries of a similar climate. There, the atmospheric conditions are hot and dry, and the body fluids are weak, and pouring cold water over those affected by the motionlessness or blackout from catalepsy will create a shock, help gather their strength, and energize the motor functions of the body to react and expel the cause, and this will bring about recovery by God's leave.

SECTION XXII
CONCENTRATION OF THE DISEASE & THE CURE
TREATING POISON WITH ITS ANTIDOTE

Abu Huraira narrated in the correct prophetic sayings, that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "If a fly falls into your drink, first drown it and then remove it, for one of its wings carries a disease and the other carries its cure." (*Reported in sahīh Bukhāri*). A similar saying is reported in the collection of prophetic traditions by Imam Ibn Māja in his *sunan*.

This prophetic saying clarifies two important aspects: one relates to religious canon (*fiqh*), and the second is a medical opinion. As for the first, it is clear and concise. It provides that if the fallen fly dies in one's drink, it does not alter the ritual purity (*tahāra*) of the drink. All religious scholars (*'ulama*) consent to this effect. God's Messenger ﷺ advised to first drown the insect before removing it. This means that the fly will surely die if it

falls into one's drink or hot food, and had this condition altered (*fasād*) their ritual purity, he would have considered the food or drink impure and discarded them. Instead, he advised to repair the harm and correct the imbalance. As a result, this jurisprudence further extended to cover the range of all insects of the Hymenoptera order, including bees, wasps, or any small arthropods like spiders and similar insects. Hence, the prophetic jurisprudence supersedes when disease is prevalent, and is not applicable in the absence of a direct cause. In the present case, since the direct cause of ritual impurity is blood, such as the vascular blood congestion of a dead animal, and since insects of the Hymenopteran order and some arthropods do not fall into this category, therefor, the rule of ritual impurity does not apply.

1. Ritual Purity (*ṯahāra*)

On this subject, Abi Sa'īd al-Khidri, God bless his soul, also elucidated that since the bones of a dead animal are not considered impure (and can be utilized as instruments or utensils), and since this is justifiable in the case of a vertebrate that, when dead, also carries *sapros* moisture, waste, corrupt blood, congestions (and other accumulations of disintegrated materials, then what about hemipteran insects and others of the Hymenopteran order) who retain no such *sapros* moisture, blood congestions, or disintegrated materials? Surely such insects may not affect food or water's ritual purity. Ibrāhim al-Nakh'i, God bless his soul, was the first to utilize the term "*mā lā nafasa lahu*"[1] in describing hemipteran insects. Later on, Muslim scholars adopted this term (*nafas, nafs*) and utilized it in their works.

2. The Medical Effects

As for the medical explanation: Abu 'Ubaida upheld the opinion that drowning the fly before removing it causes it to yield the antitoxin, as it did previously by secreting the toxin (during its initial plight for survival upon falling in the liquid matter.) In fact, flies carry a toxic substance that is evidence from the itch and swelling resulting from their bite.[2] This is their defensive mechanism, and to counter it, God's Messenger ﷺ asked to drown the fly in the liquid before removing it so that the toxin be met with its antitoxin which God Almighty placed in the second wing.

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[1] i.e., bloodless > dead. *Nafas*: Arabic> blood;

[2] cf. Hippobosca: (*hippobosca equina*) A dipterous fly of a painful sting causing swelling and itch in horses, cows, dogs and other mammals.

In fact, physicians have discovered that the Spanish fly has poison in one wing and the antidote in the other. Such is the guidance which emanates from the prophetic niche (*mishkāt*) and the treasure chest of Divine inspirations. The extent of such wisdom is kept in His infinite knowledge, and He inspires whatever He intends in foreordained measures, and to whomsoever He pleases.

On this subject, physicians formerly used to prescribe a preparation of powdered Spanish flies, and the cantharide is taken internally as a diuretic and as an aphrodisiac, and externally as a skin irritant to treat the sometimes lethal wasp sting and that of a scorpion. Such cantharides are also used to treat inflammation of the lymph nodes of the eyes (*lymphadenitis*; Arb. *sha'ara*) whereby, after discarding the head of the flies, the balance is powdered to rub the infected area. Other uses of hemipteran insects and others of the Hymenopteran order include apiotherapy[1] (*al-mu'ālaja bi-zabib al-nahl*) which uses bees' venom to treat various diseases—God knows best.

SECTION XXIII
TREATMENT FOR PIMPLES AND BOILS

Ibn al-Sinni mentioned in his book on prophetic medicine that God's Messenger ﷺ came to one of his wives and saw a boil on her finger. He asked her: "Do you have some powdered myrtle sedge?'[2] She replied: 'I do.' He said: "Apply it to your finger and pray: O Lord Who has the power to shrink what is corpulent and to bloat what is insignificant, make what befell me small."

Tharīra[3] is an Indian medicine which is made from myrtle sedge (*Hemarthria*), and it is hot and dry. It helps relieve swellings of the stomach and the liver; it cures abnormal accumulation of fluid in body cavities (i.e., *edema* or *dropsy*); and it strengthens the heart because of its sweet fragrance.

It is narrated in the *sahīh* that 'Aisha, God be pleased with her, said: "I scented God's Messenger ﷺ with myrtle sedge oil during the farewell pilgrimage twice, once before entering his state of ritual consecration (*ihrām*), and once thereafter.

A boil is an inflamed area in the body tissue that produces pus-filled swelling and is caused by a localized infection. The heat is

[1] cf. Melissotherapy: *Churchill's Dictionary of Medicine*, ed. (New York: Churchill Livingstone, 1989)

[2-3] Arb. tharīra > powder, myrtle sedge: (L Hemarthria); Arb. Qasab al- tharīr> also known as 'Ūd al-wajj.

driven by nature towards the surface, though it still needs maturation and elimination. Myrtle sedge is one of the traditional remedies used for this purpose, and besides having sweet fragrance, it cools the heat of boils. The same opinion is stated by Avicenna, who added: "There is nothing better to quell the heat of boils than applying a salve made of powdered myrtle sedge, mixed with rose leaves and vinegar."

SECTION XXIV
TREATMENT OF TUMESCENCE AND SKIN ERUPTIONS BY LANCINATION

'Ali, God bless his countenance, narrated: "I once went with God's Messenger ﷺ to visit a sick man who suffered from a swelling on his back. The person nursing him said: 'O Messenger of God, this condition has been there for a while!' God's Messenger ﷺ examined the swelling and said: 'Lance it for him.' " 'Ali expounded: "We only left after they lancinated the inflamed area (by piercing the skin with a sharp point to extract the abscess) while God's Messenger ﷺ watched over the procedure."

Abu Huraira, God be pleased with him, also narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ asked a physician to lancinate[1] a patient's abdomen to drain the stomach from corrupt juices (*sepsis*), and indigestible waste which were then taken up by suction. Someone asked: "O Messenger of God, is medicine useful?" He replied: "He Who created the disease also has created the cure whose effectiveness is subservient solely to His command."

SKIN ERUPTIONS AND SWELLINGS

Swelling is common to all diseases. It is the result of corruption of the four temperaments (*akhlãt*), besides foul fluids and dense gases in the body. If the swelling lumps in an area of the skin, it is called abscess (Arb. *khirãj*). Commonly, a hot swelling results in one of three cases: it either (1) ripens; (2) jells; or (3) hardens. A healthy body will subdue the infection, dissolve it, and flush it through the system, and this is the better outcome for a receding inflammation. Otherwise, the antibodies will ripen the infection, turn it into a white liquid matter, and drain it via a releasing point in the surface of the skin. Otherwise, if the yellowish-white liquid matter jells, and if the body is unable to expel it, one then should

[1] Lancination: Arb. *Batt*.

seek the help of a physician to lance it, or use other known medical methods to eliminate the abscess. Lancination (Arb. *batt*) serves two purposes: (1) Draining the putrid substance; and (2) eliminating possible additional contaminations of the affected area.

As for the prophetic guidance in the second saying concerning his asking a physician to lancinate a patient's abdomen to drain his stomach of *sepsis* (Arb. *jawī*), some *hakīms* are more cautious about such operation than others. Some *hakīms* refer to *jawī* as the edema (*dropsy*),[1] which is an abnormal accumulation of putrefied fluids in cells, tissues, or cavities in the body that results in swellings and distention of parts of the body where the water is accumulating. As we earlier explained, there are three kinds of dropsy: (1) skin dropsy (*conjunctive*) affecting the tissues, and that is the most serious; (2) abdominal dropsy (*edema*) which can also affect the liver; and (3) tympanitic[2] dropsy, causing distention of the abdomen by the accumulation of gas or air in the intestines or peritoneal cavity; the tympanitic dropsy causes distentions and accumulations of the layers of the bowels as a result of excess phlegm and blood in the body, and causes the stomach to sound like a drum. Tympanitic dropsy is more serious than the abdominal dropsy where *sepsis* fluids accumulate in the lower parts of the abdomen and cause the bowel to sound like water jarring in a waterskin. However, one of the possible treatments for the abdominal dropsy (formerly used) is the draining out of harmful fluid by lancination, and this category of surgery is regarded the same as venesection (*phlebotomy*), or letting out of putrid blood through the veins, though it carries serious danger, as we earlier clarified in that chapter. Nevertheless, the above prophetic saying gave definite permission to lancination, as practiced by physicians at that time—God knows best.

SECTION XXV
VISITING THE SICK

Abi Sa'īd al-Khidri narrated[3] that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "When you visit a sick person comfort him, though this does not alter his destiny, but it will calm his worries and refresh his spirit."

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[1] Dropsy: (E) anasarca; Arb. > *istisqā'*; (E) *anasarca*.
[2] Tympanitic: Arabic> *tabli*.
[3] Cf. Sunan Ibn Māja

In this benevolent prophetic saying, there is the expression of sympathy, a most noble show of compassion, as well as a most favorable type of treatment. Such attitude on the part of the visitor will relieve the patient's anxieties, refresh his spirit, and animate his heart. Subsequently, this will help change his natural disposition and aid his 'nature' to overcome the effects, and sometimes lessen or even alleviate the symptoms and defeat the cause. This is the purpose behind calling a doctor, and this is the extent of what a doctor can offer, that is, to comfort the patient's heart.

In fact, sympathicotherapy sometimes does wonders in curing an illness or in lessening its effects. Often, such ethereal support helps the human spirit, builds up the patient's will, and empowers his psychophysiological process to defeat the disease. When a dear person, a beloved, or a revered and a respected person visits a patient, one can attest to how it nurtures the patient's spirit and cheers him up through the gentle and loving words of the visitor, and even his mere presence brings peace to the heart of the patient. Such balancing and positive factors represent some of the benefits of visiting the sick. As a result, visiting the sick offers four kinds of benefits: (1) mental benefits for the patient to help reconstruct his state of body and frame of mind by God's leave; (2) benefits for the visitor; (3) conciliatory benefits for the nursing family; and furthermore, (4) has constructive benefits for the community.

We earlier saw the Prophet's compassion and love for his companions when he visited a sick person, how he gently asked him about his point of discomfort, condition, and present feelings. He cheered him up, placed his hand over his forehead, and sometimes placed it on his chest between his nipples, and prayed for him. He also prescribed the right medicine for his condition, and perhaps sometimes, God's Messenger ﷺ would take an ablution and wash the patient's face or body with it, and add: "You are fine and well. May this be a purifying visitation of Allah's Mercy." This is the utter kindness, the most noble treatment, and the correct mannerism.

SECTION XXVI
ON DIETOTHERAPY

It is better to treat the body with the kind of remedies and foods it is accustomed to absorb instead of prescribing medicines that may be harmful to the patient. This is an important principle

a physician must subscribe to. Should he neglect such basic medical notion, he may harm the patient while thinking he is benefiting him. In fact, only an ignorant physician will prescribe common drugs he finds in medical books, for the 'right medicine' and foods must agree with the patient's natural disposition. Take for example farmers, bedouins and others who have adapted to a harsh living environment, and how drinks such as nenuphar, rose petals or other delicate decoctions do little to aid their system, and almost all urban's people's dainty diets, supplements, and fine foods offer little to their system. Experienced physicians will testify to that.

However, as we discussed in a previous section, one who contemplates the medicine of God's Messenger ﷺ, will concede that it must be relevant to the patient's particular condition, environment, and local customs. This is one of the principles of the healing art a physician must value in his work. Arabs held a great esteem for al-Hārith bin Kaladah, who was to them as Hypocrite de Cos was to the Greeks, and it was this physician of the Arabs who taught: "Imposing abstinence from food and drink is the best medicine;" "The stomach is the abode of every disease;" and "Treat each person according to what his body is used to." All such great dictums guided the code of medical practice then and for centuries thereafter. Al-Hārith bin Kaladah also was quoted to have said to one of his patients: "Take the medicine, and observe abstinence from food." He meant complete abstinence (*nestitherapy*, or *limotherapy*), which is one of the best treatments for most illnesses relating to excess food consumption, acute gastrointestinal obstructions, or severe constipations (*obstipation*), and which is better than immediately treating them with purgatives or aperients should the condition not subside naturally due to indigestion of foods (*dyspepsia*), putrefaction of humors, their agitation, coction, or other complications of the digestive process.

As for his saying: "The stomach is the abode of every disease;" this refers to the stomach which is a muscular, saclike organ that resembles a Bottle-gourd. Its lining is made of neuro-fibrilose components (Arb. *leef*), which are supported and bound together with three layers of connective tissues, one formed vertically, the second horizontally, and the third diagonally. The stomach opening (*ostium*) is mostly nervate, the bottom of the stomach is sarcous, or composed of flesh and muscles (*carneous*), while the lining is fibrilose. The stomach is the alimentary canal which is located in the middle of the abdomen between the esophagus and the small intestines. The stomach is partially inclined to the right side of the body, and is created thus to satisfy a subtle

knowledge only a Wise Creator can concoct. Such is the organ al-Hārith bin Kaladah refers to as the abode of every disease, because it is the organ into which food passes from the gullet for storage while undergoing the early processes of digestion, also known as the first digestion. When coction is complete, the nutrients travel to the liver and further to the small intestines where most of the digestion takes place. Unusable parts the body cannot fully digest because of their volume, indigestible foods, corrupt foods, or the wrong admixture of foods, or a combination of all these factors, together with other sediments they travel by waves of muscle contractions to the large intestines and are emitted as excrement. What the body cannot naturally dispose of due to intestinal malabsorption will remain as waste that will undergo degenerative changes, and failure to treat it with the pertinent medicine will cause an illness.

This is why al-Hārith bin Kaladah called the stomach "the abode of every disease." It is as though he was indicating the need for the human being to control his intake of food, restrain his mind and desire (*nafs*) from indulgence and excess, and to follow the correct dietary rules instead of becoming addicted to food, and abnormal and insatiable craving for food, also known as *phagomania*.

Such harmful habits can overtake one's very own nature, and that is why they say: "Habit is a second nature." That is because habit can become a strong, uncontrollable, and a stubborn force that regulates one's rhythm, and modifies his behavior.

Let's for instance compare the influence of one substance in three human beings whose bodies are accustomed to different kinds of food, although they may have similar characteristics in other areas. All three bodies possessed hot temperament during their youth. One is accustomed to eating hot foods, the second is accustomed to eating cold foods, and the third is accustomed to eating mild foods. If the first person eats honey, it will not affect his system, however if the second person eats honey, it will definitely upset his system, and when the third person eats it, it will have meager effects on his system. Thus, habits play a major role in health preservation, and in the treatment of diseases. This is why the prophetic medicine devised remedies that are compatible with each individual, and in agreement with his nutritional habits, and there are no medicines better than that.

DIETARY PLANNING

The patient's diet must be carefully planned, and depending on the physician's recommendation, it ranges between absolute diet and a subsistence one. In the case of subsistence diet, meals must be rich in nutritional values, easily digestible and tasty, and they must conform to the patient's customary food.

On this subject, it is reported in the two collections of correct prophetic traditions (*sahīh*), by 'Aisha, God be pleased with her, that whenever someone died in their family, the women gathered, planned, then dispersed to their homes to prepare their share of food to help the bereaved family of the deceased. 'Aisha would usually ask the women to prepare a pot of *Talbīna*, which is a soup made from flour of bran and sweetened with honey. 'Aisha herself would make a dish sopped with bread, meat and broth (Arb. *Tharīd*), and pour the *Talbīna* over it. 'Aisha asserted that she heard God's Messenger ﷺ say: "Talbīna enlivens the innermost heart of the sick, and lessens his sorrow." It is also narrated by 'Aisha, God be pleased with her, that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "When struck by what you abominate, use the pleasing and nourishing soup (*Talbīna*) to overcome it." It is also reported in the traditions that when someone fell ill in God's Messenger's house, he kept a pot of soup (Arb. *burma*) on the fire until the patient carried through one of the two confines—meaning recovery or death. When he learned about someone's illness, he immediately replied: "Feed him a soup of *Talbīna*, for it washes the patient's stomach clean, just as one of you washes her face of dirt."

Imam Bukhāri explained that *Talbīna* is a light broth that resembles milk. Such basic, easily digestible, nutritional, and sometimes, meatless soup is filling and gives relief from stress and sorrow. The benefits of *Talbīna* come from the broth of barley flour which is cooked with its bran. The basic difference between this soup and that of the common barley broth, is that in the latter, the barley is cooked whole, and in *Talbīna* the barley is made farinaceous, and this brings out its rich nutrients. As we have earlier explained, customary eating habits play an important role in increasing the benefits of medicines and nutrients. As for the inhabitants of urban areas, boiled barley water seems to better agree with their digestive system. In essence, when barley is cooked whole, its nutrients pass by the system and confer little of their benefits. However, drinking the broth of hot barley flour helps to accelerate the penetration of its nutrients into the patient's system, acts as a stronger cathartic, and proves more dedicated to furthering one's nature, and protecting the stomach's lining.

As for God's Prophet's saying: "It enlivens the innermost heart," it denotes here the cardia of the stomach, and it means that it comforts the body and softens the stomach. As for lessening the patient's sorrow, God knows best—for sorrow and grief cool the humors and weaken body defenses because one's spirit (*rūh*) is leaning then towards the heart which is its natural abode. Drinking such broth warms up one's stomach, reanimates the body's defences, and hence lessens the trauma brought about by one's sufferings. Others may say that the broth will lessen one's sufferings because it lifts the patient's spirits, and because of refreshing substances some foods contain. It is also said that sorrow dries up one's body, and particularly his stomach. Of course, lack of food has much to contribute to that. However, such hot broth will moisten the stomach, strengthen and nourish it, and subsequently, the effects reach the heart. On the other hand, often, when under stress, the patient's stomach produces a higher level of gastric juices, and accumulates phlegm and purulence; hence, taking the barley broth helps flush away such unnecessary accumulations, as well as soothe the body, come to its defense, break the tension, balance the humors, raise the spirit, and help one to regain his poise. This is particularly true for the dwellers of the blessed City of Medina who are accustomed to eating barley bread, which used to be their main source of energy, especially when wheat used to be an expensive commodity—God knows best.

SECTION XXVII
TREATMENT OF FOOD POISONING

In 7 A.H., after the peace treaty of Khybar, whereby Jewish-Muslim relations returned to normal, a Jewish woman from Khybar named Zaynab, daughter of al-Hārith, cooked a goat and presented it to God's Messenger ﷺ as a gift. On this subject, 'Abdu-Rahmān bin Ka'ab bin Mālik narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ sat down with his companions to eat. Beside him sat Bishr ibn al-Barā', and after taking the first bite, God's Messenger ﷺ stopped and immediately said: "Stop that woman!" When she stood before him, he asked her: "Did you poison this goat?" She replied: "Who told you?" Holding to the piece he ate from, he replied: "This leg told me." The woman confessing to her evil act then said: "I thought that if you were a liar, this would put an end to you, and if you are a true prophet, this would not harm you." God's Messenger ﷺ let the woman go. He then applied cupping for three days, and asked his companions to do the same. However, the one mouthful Bishr ate was fatal.

In another narration, it is reported that it was one of the companions named Abu Hind of Medina who applied the cupping on the upper part of the back, and performed venesection on God's Messenger ﷺ. This poison affected his body as a whole, and three years later, during his last illness, God's Messenger ﷺ said: "I still ache from that one bite of poisoned goat meat I ate at Khybar."

Food poisoning comes from eating certain chemicals or organisms and their toxins. There are many types of treatments for food poisoning. It is always best to call for emergency help in such case. However, physicians treat each case of food poisoning according to the type, substance and quantity of contaminated food ingested, if known. This is usually done through various kinds of purgations, inducing vomiting, complete detoxification, hematocatharsis, washing out the stomach and intestinal tract (*lavage*), as well as taking the correct type of counterpoison or theriaca and post recovery medications when the treatment is done without delay and depending on its success.

In the absence of immediate access to emergency medical treatment, one must at once induce vomiting, complete purgation, and the best treatment, At the time of God's Messenger ﷺ under such circumstances was bloodletting through cupping or*phlebotomy*. When food poisoning takes place in hot climates and during the hot season, poison spreads fast throughout one's system via the bloodstream, and the venom intersperses through the veins and arteries to reach the heart, and in that case is fatal. Hence, the blood is the medium that carries the venom to the heart and the rest of the body. The victim of food poisoning must then hasten to expel the lethal toxin from his body expeditiously, and particularly through bloodletting, this will also help drive out the toxic blood, and with it, much of the poison that has already reached the bloodstream. If the application is successful and the purgation is integral and swift, the poison will have little or no effect. In this sense, the venom will either be completely expelled, or weakened and its effects halted.

When God's Messenger ﷺ applied cupping to the upper part of his back, where the shoulder blades (*scapula*) are the nearest place to the heart where one may perform cupping, the venom was partially removed, and its effects were reduced to a minimal general malaise God's Messenger ﷺ suffered for the following three years. In His divine subtle wisdom, God Almighty also intended to endow His Messenger with the blessings and honorable station of martyrdom, ﴾ So that Allah might accomplish a matter already enacted...﴿ (*Qur'an 8:42*). This also explains the meaning of God's

words in the holy Qur'an, addressing the Jews; He said: ❮ Will you then scorn each Apostle whose message does not suit your fancies; some you called imposters, and others you slay!❯ (*Qur'an 2:87*) In the latter verse, God Almighty used the past tense for 'calling' and the present tense for 'slaying', in reference to the Messenger whose coming was known in their scriptures, and who they awaited in his motherland—God knows best.

SECTION XXVIII
CAELOTHERAPY AND COUNTERING WITCHCRAFT

Bewitchment is an illness and an anomalous condition that must be treated like any other disorder. Among its symptoms are delusion, imaginary visions, fascination; captivation, and misconceptions, besides other indications, all of which may elude one's true perception from time to time.

The prophetic guidance in this area is divided into two sections: (1) annulment of the evil 'act'; and (2) complete purgation and balancing of humors. The first is most consequential, and necessitates exposure of the evil 'work', its invalidation and abolition.

On this subject, 'Aisha, God be pleased with her, narrated[1] that a man from the tribe of Bani Zuraiq, known as Lubaid bin al-A'asam concocted an evil 'work' towards God's Messenger ﷺ who then experienced severe headache, discomfort, and general malaise. One day God's Messenger ﷺ was resting in his bed when two angels stood by his head. One of them inquired: "What is he hurting from?" The other replied: "He is spell-struck[2]." The first angel then asked: "Who did it?" The second replied: "Lubaid bin al-A'asam." "How?" The first inquired, and the second angel replied: "He concocted this by using (the Prophet's) personal comb, a couple of hairs that came with it, and the skin of pollen of a male date palm." The first asked: "Where did he embed them?" The second replied: "He buried them inside the well of Tharwãn." Shortly after that, God's Messenger ﷺ opened his eyes and turned to 'Aisha to say: "O 'Aisha, Allah has instructed me concerning the matter about which I asked Him," and he told her what happened. Describing the well, he added: "O 'Aisha, the color of its water turned dark-red like an infusion of henna leaves. Moreover, the

[1] Sahih Bukhãri; Book of Medicine, cf. #658.

[2] Spell-struck: bewitched; Arabic > *maṭbūb*> *ṭibb*, medicine.

tops of the palm trees near the well looked like heads of demons." God's Messenger ﷺ then ordered the evil 'work' exposed, the well leveled and filled with earth, and God Almighty granted him complete recovery, and endowed him with an infallible protection (*'iṣma*) from human's evil intentions thereafter.

The above narration depicts the human temperament of God's Messenger ﷺ, as he too was subject to many sufferings and persecution which his companions also experienced, as did many of God's messengers and prophets, upon all of whom be peace. Such human characteristics do in no way contrast his heavenly station, being the seal of God's prophets and messengers, or the exalted mission he carried out to guide humanity from darkness into light. Although some scholars do question the authenticity of this tradition, it is recorded in all the major collections of correct prophetic traditions, and in any case, our objective here is to discuss the way for the victim of witchery to set himself free from the evil 'work'.

The first thing one recognizes from the above startling tradition is that as soon as the evil 'work' of witchcraft is exposed, its effect will break up, and one will regain his natural temperament. This is similar to expelling a putrefacted matter from one's body by purgation, or undergoing a therapy of complete detoxification. This brings us to the second kind of treatment, that is, a complete purgation and balancing of humors, and particularly in the area affected by the evil 'work'. In fact, necromancy can affect body temperaments and disturb the natural balance of the humors. When symptoms of bewitchment or evil eye affect an area of one's body, one must start by expelling the corrupted substance from that part of his body.

In his collection of startling traditions (*gharīb al-ḥadīth*), Abu 'Ubaid narrated that when witchery (*ṭibb*) was directed towards God's Messenger ﷺ, he treated his discomfort by applying cupping to his vertex. In this sense, *tibb* or medicine denotes the evil 'work' of necromancy. In fact, witchery represents the evil intention of the sorcerer in concert with the work of accursed evil spirits who are the hosts of hell-fire. When successful, such sacrilegiousness can sometimes affect one's natural balance and the chemistry of body temperaments. This is particularly true when the evil spell is designed to produce divagation and fugue, causing intermittent lapse of memory, which type of sorcery has a strong impact and influence over one's general constitution.

According to several scholarly sources, though conflicting in their opinions, in his first response to his general malaise, God's Messenger ﷺ initially applied cupping to the particular area causing headache and malaise. Perhaps he attributed his discomfort to a corrupt blood matter that might have harbored in the brain and affected the frontal lobe of the cerebrum. In that case, cupping would be the best treatment according to both Hypocrite andAvicenna. However, when God Almighty revealed the true nature of the evil 'work' directed towards His Messenger ﷺ, he immediately exposed it, buried its effects, and regained his strength. It was as though he was set free by removing a tightly strapped headband. The intention behind such witchcraft was to affect his body and debilitate his energies, and in no way could it affect his heart or judgement. Recognizing that, God's Messenger ﷺ treated it accordingly— God knows best.

SPIRITUAL REMEDIES

Spiritual remedies are the real antidote against necromancy and witchery, for truth is the archenemy of falsehood, light is the antithesis of darkness, and gratitude is the opposite of caffard (Arb. *kufur*). In truth, nothing can counteract and neutralize the evil effects and further defeat the malignancy and vice of wicked dark spirits better than one's faith and nearness to his Lord. This is the divine medicine (*dawā' ilāhi*) no disease can resist, this is the helmet and the shield nothing can penetrate, and this is the acquired piety (*taqwa*), a warrior must permanently wear inwardly and outwardly.

To counteract such vice-laden spirits, one must keep a strong focus on God's path. One must acquire the luminous knowledge of sages, and complete the workout of the schooling of warriors. As when two armies face one another, each one of them must be ready and well equipped, but one will be victorious, and the other defeated. Like that, the heart of a believer must be filled with the light of God Almighty, satiated with exalted thoughts, and empowered with knowledge of his Sustainer. His body, mind and soul must be tracking the path of the ascending ladder with sincerity and determination. The success of his schooling will determine the ease with which he overcomes his trials. His tongue must be reciting the formulas his innermost being recognizes and explains to him along the path. Such clear highway signs are his guide to avoiding road obstructions and possibly becoming a victim and prey to evil spirits.

Just as the eyes are the windows that channel light into the body which then transforms it into strengthening nutrients, similarly, invoking the Divine Attributes (*zikr*) will sharpen one's hearing and sight, and sustain his faculties. In fact, only such cognizance in one's heart can dispel the darkness of a slumberous brain, and help one overcome an otherwise unavoidable defeat and lasting loss.

Recognizing such attributes will lift off the veils of mystery, and allow one to see and experience the manifest signs of his Lord. These are the guiding pillars on God's path; He posted them out in the open for people to see. On the other hand, the vice-laden and accursed evil spirits have concocted and organized a vicious war aiming at misleading the ignorant, the innocent, and the weak. Such war of deception has entrapped and misled the majority of people throughout history. Only the best trained, the most sincere, and the best of the faithful ones were able to escape and win victory.

In fact, the proclamation of God's Oneness is His proclamation, the sovereignty belongs solely to Him; His blessed Messengers form one brotherhood, and the divine call and warning were sent to all of humanity. Neither Nemrod nor Pharaoh were able to challenge that, nor will anyone else be able to obstruct His purpose, and ultimately, His Will shall prove to be the triumphant one. Even the evil spirits know that. What a wonder! Their case is like that of a sufferer of bubonic plague who envies the rest of the people for their health, and wishes everyone to share in the misery. To do so, he may put on a mask to deceive people, knowing that his mere contact with them will spread his contagious and fatal disease. As God's Messenger ﷺ said: "From contact comes destruction."[1]

Hence, reciting formulas (*zikr*), Qur'anic verses, and continuously asking and praying for God's guidance is the best medicine that will definitely nullify the evil 'work' of witchcraft and break through its net. In fact, sorcery and witchcraft can affect seriously only weak hearts,[2] emotionally disturbed people, the ignorant ones, and the lust-bound seekers. Such people will even find it hard to escape the domination of their addictions, while the function of their evil masters is to keep a tight grip over them, and keep them inebriated till death comes.

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[1] cf. Section III, *Treatment of Plague.*

[2] cf. "Verily, you have no authority over My servants." (*Qur'an 17:65*)

Women, youth, ignorant people, and dwellers of the wilderness are the common category of such victims. Among the various categories also come believers who do not obey the command of their Lord, embrace what He mandates, and avoid what He forbids, and believers who have little luck in benefiting from their regular prayers which would cement together the benefits of one's good deeds, protect him from pitfalls, and bring him nigh to his Lord.

It is also said that a spell-struck or bewitched person is one who helps his adversary take control over him. In other words, he is witch-charmed, and he is a person who enjoys it, and is fascinated by it. Every illusion he sees further allures him. In fact, evil spirits can only muster such control when they find receptive people who can be easily distracted, and who are obsessed by miracles and temporary stimulation and excitement and like what the evil spirits want for them. Such people lack the might of godliness, which strength is based on knowledge, faith and determination. Such spirit of godliness in human beings is a light which is empowered to dispel darkness.

God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Evil spirits of jinns have no access to human beings except through the evil spirits of other human beings." Hence, one must choose his environment, be selective about his companions, answer the call of God Almighty, and pray for protection and guidance.

SECTION XXIX
PURGATION THROUGH VOMITING

Imam al-Tirmithi narrated in his collection (*jãmi'*), a prophetic tradition reported by Abi Dardã' in which God's Messenger ﷺ vomited, then renewed his ablution. Imam al-Tirmithi then said: "I met (one of the early companions known as) Thawbãn in Damascus who confirmed the incident, and added: "Abi-d-Dardã' spoke the truth, for I was the one who poured the water for his ablution."

Vomiting is one of the five basic kinds of purgation, namely: (1) diarrhea; (2) vomiting; (3) phlebotomy and nosebleeding; (4) perspiration and vaporization of moistures in the body (Arb. *tabakhkhur*); and (5) urination. All five were mentioned in the prophetic traditions. We spoke in an earlier section about diarrhea and bowel movement, about which treatments, God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Some of your best treatments lie in taking medicinal snuff, venesection, cupping, and in purgation." We also spoke about bloodletting and cupping in their respective sections, and

God willing, we shall speak about vapor buildup in the following section. As for purgation through perspiration or sweat, this is usually a natural, involuntary emission of excess moisture which nature eliminates by driving it out through the pores of the skin. As for vomiting (*emesia*), this is the discharge of stomach contents through the upper tract, while enema (*clyster*) is the evacuation of superfluous matters and washing of the intestines by forcing a cathartic through the anus.

There are two kinds of vomit: (1) incoercible vomiting, which is an involuntary discharge of emesia driven by nausea and biliousness; and (2) inducing vomiting with or without an emetic. The first type needs neither be obstructed nor stimulated, except if one fears subsequent putrefaction and hypertoxicity. Only then it must be allayed with a calmative to break up its acidity and halt its effects. As for inducing vomiting, it is lifesaving in the case of emergency treatment for food poisoning, and it is beneficial when purgation of superfluous matters will bring about balance of humors, and when time and conditions necessitate such cleansing.

1. Causes of Vomiting

Vomiting is stimulated by eleven impelling forces: (1) Biliousness, or yellow bile spilling over the stomach cardia and seeking a way out through the upper tract; (2) stomach corruption, excess mucus, and agitation of the stomach; (3) poor digestion; (4) wrong food admixture and eating raw vegetables or unripe fruits; (5) excessive eating and drinking causing upset stomach; (6) rejection of immiscible food by the stomach; (7) lesions in the intestines; (8) vomiturition and corruption of stomach juices into rheum; (9) food intolerance, nausea from psychological disgust with filth (*coprophobia*), offending foods, or hypersensitivity towards special undesirable food (*opsophobia*), [or even fear of mere eating (*sitophobia*) also may cause squeamishness and vomiting]; (10) psychological and emotional stress, melancholy, worries, sorrow, developing motor abreaction produced by painful memories and emotions; and (11) communicative vomiting caused by mere witnessing someone else suffering from it. In fact, there are many types of communicable diseases that spread by sympathetic susceptibility—including, itch, boils, yawning, sneezing, fear, and mirth, etcetera. Of course, such condition of susceptibility must be dormant in the recipient before it is stimulated by sensory contact for the brain to recall it.

2. Humoral Reaction in the Digestive Process

Since humors (*akhlāt*) in hot climates and hot seasons become thinner and rise, inducing vomiting is the best treatment. Since humors in cold climate and cold seasons become thicker and heavier, and harder to pull up, purging them by enema or clyster is more beneficial.

Elimination of excess humors is done through either attraction (*jathb*) or by repellence (*daf'*). Attraction is done from the farthest point, and repellence is done from the closest point. The difference between them is that when biliousness spilling over the stomach cardia, or rising, it is eliminated through attraction (by enema). If biliousness continues to rise, it then requires repellence (by vomiting). Hence, when putrefaction affects the upper part of the body, it is eliminated through the lower section, and when it affects the lower part of the body, it is eliminated through the upper section. If neither enema or vomiting works, or if it is too late, and the biliousness has already become stationary, then it is purged from the nearest point possible. This is the reason why God's Messenger ﷺ applied cupping sometimes over the upper part of his back, sometimes over the vertex, and sometimes over the anklebone. Through such treatment, he was able to extract the corrupt blood through the nearest point—God knows best.

3. The Benefits and Disadvantages of Vomiting

In general, inducing vomiting cleanses the stomach, strengthens and rejuvenates the digestive process, sharpens one's sight, relieves heaviness of the head, helps remedy kidney sores, venereal, and genital chancroids; it also helps in the treatment of chronic illnesses such as leprosy, dropsy, paralysis, and muscle tremors (*myokymia*), as well as helps in the treatment of jaundice (*icterus*).

In the past, inducing vomiting was recommended for even healthy people. They used it up to twice a month as a general body cleansing therapy to expel superfluous matters. Hypocrite used to recommend using a vomitive in the summer, and evacuation using a cathartic in the winter. However, excessive use of such therapy can cause degenerative diseases, damage the stomach lining and create dependency, making the stomach unable to independently digest food. Excess use of such therapy also can hurt the eyes, teeth, and hearing, and may cause extravasation, heat, and excessive sweat. Such harmful therapy also must be avoided by someone suffering from chronic throat infection, asthmatic

condition, or someone with a tight neck, or when coughing up blood (*hemoptysis*), or someone undergoing the straining action of retching without bringing anything up. Such warning is particularly beneficial if heeded by those who have forgotten about proper balanced eating habits, who gorge themselves with surfeit food, then throw up as a routine (cf. *bulimarexia* or *anorexia*). Whatever may be the causes such people suffer, it must be noted here that routine vomiting or retching, along with irritable bowel syndrome, causes gastric fermentation, stomach dryness, weakness of intestines (*viscera*), abnormal anxiety over having imaginary illness (*hypochondriasis*), or general malaise and body weakness, and under such conditions, inducing vomiting is extremely dangerous.

FORMULA

However, under different circumstances, one should follow any kind of vomiting with proper ablution, or wash his face with cold water, drink apple juice, add a minute amount of cashew oil of the mastic tree,[1] and mix it with rose water.

6
MUSLIMS' CONTRIBUTION TO THE HEALING ARTS

In his collection of prophetic guidance (*Muwaṯṯa' Mālik*), Imam Mālik, God bless his soul, reported that Zaid bin Aslam narrated that during the time of God's Messenger ﷺ, a man was wounded, his wound became infected, and his blood congested. The man called for two self-professed physicians from the tribe of Bani Anmār to examine his condition. According to this narration, God's Messenger ﷺ was then present, and he asked them: "Who among you is the better physician?" The wounded man inquired: "O Messenger of God, are there any benefits in medicine at this stage?" God's Messenger ﷺ replied: "He Who created the illness, also has created the cure."

The initial benefits one may receive from this prophetic guidance indicates that one must seek the help of the best qualified person in every field. The opinion of an expert is more reliable and valuable, and will most likely prevail. Hence, soliciting medical opinions should first commence with the best known practitioner, then followed by a second opinion. For example, if one finds himself

[1] Mastic tree: Lentisk; L *pistacia lentiscus* of the cashew family. Arb. *masṯaki*, or *baṯm sharqi*.

unable to determine the correct direction of the Ka'aba in Mecca to perform his prayers, he should seek a more knowledgeable person, a scholar, or stand behind a known Imam. In another example: during a journey by sea, one feels more comfortable and at ease when he trusts that the captain of the ship is experienced, conforms to a map, and knows what he is doing. One must seek such a guide, and depend on his expertise.

In such a way, natural disposition (Arb. *fiṯra*) is the exalted work of God Almighty Who made it innate in all of the creation. Religious laws, natural dispositions, and common sense are in agreement on this point. The saying of God's Messenger ﷺ: "He Who created the illness, also has created the cure" confirms that Allah, the Most Exalted, has created a cure for every disease, and made it available to the true and serious seekers, though the majority of people do not know that. That is why God's Messenger ﷺ said: "It is clear to those who know it, and indistinguishable to those who are ignorant of it." Some accounts of the above prophetic narration used the term: "placed it", "revealed it", "created it", "delivered it", "carried it", "brought it down", etcetera; all of such expressions indicate the function of blessed angels who are in charge of this specific duty, to bring down (Arb. *inzãl*) the medicine, and place it on earth for those who need it, and those who seek it. And Allah, the Most Exalted, kept the effectiveness of such remedies conditional upon His command, though secular physicians may argue that, nevertheless, the majority of patients recognize the latter fact, and particularly when their condition is rapidly deteriorating. However, only the rare few live with this knowledge upon recovery by God's leave. Thus, there are angels who descend from the heavens by His command, and who are in charge of serving God's will on earth, and specifically serve the needs He also created for humankind. Similar to that is the life He creates in the womb of a mother, the delivery of the newborn, his life and sustenance on earth, up to his death and later resurrection. All of such duties are entrusted to these blessed angels.

Other theologians explain that remedies placed on earth remain dormant, and they become effective through the rain which quickens the dead. Like that, food, nutrients, remedies, and illnesses, and even their transmitting agencies—cause and effect—all come to life through rain. Several remedies are minerals which are deposited at high altitudes, others are deposited in different layers of the earth, as well as in rivers and plants, etcetera, all of which are relevant to the expression *tanzïl*, to bring down.

Creating a cure for every disease proves the prominence of divine wisdom, the supremacy of God's sovereignty, and His perfect compassion towards His creation. He Who created the illnesses also has established the laws of nature, and revealed the signs of Who controls the universes. He Who created the adversities, sufferings, and trials has also created the remedies to help people recover from their ingratitude and indulgences, and He also created a cure for every disease. He gives people a chance to wash their sins with repentance, and He regards the good deeds, trials and sufferings of the believers as the ladder that raises them in stations, and brings them nigh unto Himself. As for others, and after their repentance, their trials become the counterbalance of their hideousness at the time of their ignorance. As He gave to humankind the challenge of facing evil spirits, He also helps the believers to overcome the forces of darkness with the soldiers of light who are His blessed angels. God Almighty created natural desires and pleasures, but He also regulated them with the laws of permissible fulfillment, and He defined the ephemeral and the eternal benefits thereof. Thus, whatever concerns and hardships His servants may face during their journey in this life, He also provided them with the instruments to overcome them, and made faith the light that dispels the aggression of the forces of darkness. The difference between people is their level of knowledge, and the ease with which they can access such benefits—indeed, Allah is the best helper.

7
PHYSICIAN'S LIABILITY

1.1 PRACTICING MEDICINE WITHOUT QUALIFICATION

Imam Abu Dãwoud, Imam Nisã'i, and Imam ibn Mãja reported from the narration of Amru-bnu Shu'aib that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Whosoever claims to be a physician, though unknown to such profession, is subject to personal liability (*d̲ãmin*)."

1.2 MEDICINE (*T̲IBB*) IN LANGUAGE

The above prophetic saying deals with three aspects: (1) linguistic; (2) jurisprudential; and (3) medical. As for the linguistic interpretation, and as in the English language, the word *t̲ibb* in the Arabic language carries several meanings, among them: to amend, restore, adjust, improve, correct, as well as kindness, expertise, judiciousness, skilfulness, dexterousness, tactfulness,

resourcefulness, competence, maturity, sagaciousness, habit, regular practice, perspicacity, intelligence, sophistication, cleverness, efficiency, ability to negotiate, mastering with consummate skills, finesse, as well as aspiration and glad tidings.

Besides nouns related to the above list, *ṯabīb* (physician) in Arabic also could mean: medicine man, or sorcerer, while illness (*maradh*) could mean incompetence, witchery, dissonance, insanity, offensiveness, disease, weariness, affliction, falling in love, and disconsolation. Arabs used the term sick also to mean: sick at heart, enamored, in love, soul-sick, sore-heart, discontented, satiated, crazy, and so forth. Using the idiom *ṯibb* to mean falling in love, the Arab poet al-H̲amãsi said:

If I am sick,[1] *then let this be my lasting illness*
and, if I am bewitched,[2] *then let it be an unbreakable spell.*

The term 'claim' used by God's Messenger ﷺ, to mean 'profess to be a physician,' also means: self-proclaim, allege, purport, or fake. For the act of claiming something one does not have, whether he does so intentionally or unintentionally, can possibly still bring about harmful results. It also means affectation and unnaturalness, which is seen in someone who compels himself to act as a physician, when he does not possess the naturalness and qualifications of the practitioners of such profession. This includes knowledge, balance, confidence, patience, forbearance, fear of wrongdoing, and similar professional characteristics, besides mastering the use of the tools of the profession.

1.3 Liability of Physicians in Islamic Medical Jurisprudence

According to Islamic jurisprudence (*Sh̲arī'a*), the liability of a self-professed physician includes: infringement, felony, deception, and endangering others' lives. Such act also proves that the 'felon', in this case, cares little about human life, and irresponsibly hastens to indulge in a profession about which he may have hidden motives, or for merely monetary gains. In such case, he deceives the patient at a time when his morale is very weak, and his desire for recovery is strong. The 'felon', in this case, is liable for all of the above, besides other incriminating charges, and must pay compensation for whatever damages he caused. The majority of Muslim scholars agree to that effect. However, in a different view, al-K̲h̲aṯṯãbi[3] added:

[1] Sick: madly in love; Arb. *maṯbüb.*
[2] Bewitched: Arb. *mash̲ür; maṯbüb.*
[3] Al-K̲h̲aṯṯãbi, *Ibn K̲h̲abãza, Maimoun bin 'Ali,* d. 637 C.E.

"I do not know of a precedent concerning a different verdict for a self-professed physician besides the above. Nevertheless, the judgement may be suspended, because permission to act was given to him by the patient, and he would not have been able to operate without such permission, and the patient's failure to investigate the credentials of his physician remains his own fault."

1.4 The Five Categories of Physicians

Adverse results, or 'mistakes' rendered by physicians vis-á-vis the patients may be classified in five categories: (1) a physician who is highly trained, who adheres to the ethics of his profession, and who performed his services according to the rules, though according to the Divine Will, the patient's destiny took an adverse course, or whose patient did not follow the physician's instructions, and consequently his condition aggravated, resulting in the loss of a common natural ability, an organ, or a limb, or perhaps whose health complications could have led to his death. In such case, all Muslim scholars consent that the physician is not liable. Aggravation also can be caused by a pathogenic organism (Arb. *sirãya*), or by another causative agent. The same verdict is given in the case of circumcision (*posthetomy*), for example. If a qualified physician applies his expertise, and performs the operation on a child at a suitable age and time, and if after the surgical operation, the child should suffer from complications, or if such complications cause permanent injury to the child's reproductive organ, the physician is still acquitted from any liability. The same opinion applies in the case of lancination (Arb. *batt*), and whether the patient is mentally sound (*orthophrenic*), or otherwise, still, according to Islamic laws, the expert physician is not liable.

Such is the Islamic jurisprudential verdict in any operation or treatment consented to by the patient (Arb. *sirãya ma'thouna* or waiver). Hence, the benefits suggested by the prophetic guidance to seek the help of the best qualified person in every field are most praiseworthy, and even under such circumstances, should anything go against the physician's plans, this will be attributed to the 'Act of God'.

1.5 Liability According To The Four Imams

Imam Abu Hanïfa, and Imam al-Shãfi'i, both agree that contagion resulting from correctly performing one's duty is not subject to compensation, while any damages resulting from felony, imposture, or malpractice entitle the patient, or in the case of his death, his family, to compensation. Furthermore, concerning the question

of personal liability, Imam al-Shãfi'i made an exception of the death of a rented animal for business or travel, in which scenario, if the animal dies as a result of abuse, or during the course of a journey, the renter is still liable for full payment.

In essence, the rule of liability as agreed upon by the host of Muslim scholars provides that consequential damages (*sirãya-tu jinãya*) are subject to liability, while occupational mishap, complications, or losses (*sirãya-tul wãjib*) are not subject to restitution by the physician. The difference in opinion between the four scholars is that Imam Abu Hanïfa made the rule absolute, and considered that the patient's consent is given as a trust in the ability of the physician to perform; Imam al-Shãfi'i excluded the 'Act of God' from personal liability; while Imam Ahmad and Imam Mãlik, God bless them all, considered the patient's consent the needed element to absolve the physician from any liability.

1.6 Liability of a Felon

(2) The second category of liability is that of an impostor or of an ignorant person, who is able to deceptively convince the patient of his ability to cure him. As a result, the patient may die, or his illness may compound. In this case, if the patient knew that his attendant is not a physician, and if he consented to the suggested treatment, then there is no liability. This determination does not contradict the above prophetic saying. However, if the patient unsuspectingly thinks that the person offering his services is a physician, or if the latter convinces the patient, by implied presentation, coercion, or by advocating firm knowledge in the matter, or if the felon prescribes a remedy, and if upon using it, the patient suffers from complications, then the violator is liable as clearly cited in the above prophetic saying.

1.7 Liability for Accidental Perpetration

(3) The third category of liability is that of a learned and experienced physician who performs his services according to the prescribed rules, and if accidentally his hand reaches to a healthy part of the patient's body, and damages it by mistake, the physician is liable. In the abovementioned ruling, during circumcision for example, if the physician, by mistake, inflicts a cut in the urethra, or if his blade accidentally damages the scrotum or the testes of the child, the physician is held liable for the damages, and must compensate the patient, or his family. According to Islamic law, this is called 'accidental perpetration' (*jinãyatu khata'*).

1.8 Liability for Giving The Wrong Medicine

(4) The fourth category of liability is that of a well-trained and learned physician who attempts his best, and still makes an incorrect diagnosis, or prescribes a harmful medicine by mistake. As a result of his decision, the patient suffers from complications, and if the medicine culminates in the patient's death, the liability remains that of the physician. However, in this case, the compensation may be paid by either the physician or by the Muslim treasury (*bait-ul māl*). One of the precedents applying to this situation was established by Imam Aḫmad in reference to a mistake of judgement made by a ruler or a judge.

1.9 Liability for Operating Without The Patient's Consent

(5) The fifth category of liability is that of a well-trained and learned physician who performs his services according to the prescribed rules, though, in the case of circumcision, or in the case of operating on a minor, or on a mentally-retarded person, for example, the physician fails to obtain consent from the family, and should the patient or the child suffer from complications or losses, the physician is definitely liable. However, if the mentally-retarded, or a pubescent youth gives permission for the physician to operate on him as a charity, then the physician's liability can either be established or withheld. In this case, the physician is doing charity, because the person with good intent should not be persecuted for consequential damages. The opinions of Muslim scholars vary in this case. The most strict of opinions requires the physician to compensate the patient or his family, whether he did obtain permission from the youth or not. In this case, some theologians consider it as an infraction, a violation of the patient's innate rights, and a professional malpractice.

2. Who Is A Physician (*Ṯabïb*)?

In the abovementioned prophetic saying: "Whosoever claims to be a physician," the Arabic word *taṭabbaba* used by God's Messenger ﷺ implies: (1) one who diagnoses people's illnesses, treats their illness with his advice and prescriptions, sells herbs and herbal medicines, dispenses balms, stimulants, drugs, antidotes, cathartics, emetics, cough medicines, or any palliative, and who also advises customers on their dosage and usage, also known in Arabic as *ṭaba'i'i*, or specialist in natural medicine; (2) a practitioner of any of the branches of the healing arts, including manufacturers

and sellers of medicinal formulas; (3) a surgeon; (4) an orthopedist; (5) a veterinarian; or any related or known therapeutic medical practitioners, including faith healing.

3. Rules of Medical Diagnosis and Treatment

An experienced and intelligent physician follows twenty rules in diagnosing an illness and in treating the patient, including:

1- Firstly, he determines and classifies the kind of illness.
2- Investigates the aetiology of the disease, its origin, and cause.
3- Investigate the body's constitution, the patient's present condition, and his points of strength and weakness. If the patient's condition is able to combat the disease, the physician should abstain from, or delay, prescribing any medicines.
4- Examines the balance of humors.
5- Identifies the condition of the corrupt humor.
6- Considers the age of the patient.
7- Considers his habits.
8- Considers the season and time of the year, and what treatment can be more effective then.
9- Considers the motherland of the patient, and kind of soil he grew up in.
10- Considers the living conditions, and level of air pollution surrounding the patient.
11- Defines the kind of restorative the patient can sustain.
12- Determines the potency of the medicine he intends to prescribe, and the necessary dosage needed to overcome the disease.
13- the physician's goal should not be limited to overcoming the symptoms or isolating them, but instead, concentrate on expelling the illness in a way that will not promote aggravations, or more serious side effects. In such case, radical elimination of the illness requires gradual decrease of its intensity, before deciding whether surgery is needed, or whether a different kind of treatment is possible, such as in the example of varicose veins, except in serious cases.
14- In common situations, the physician must use his wisdom in prescribing the most simple of treatments before deciding on upgrading its potency. For example, it should be the physician's pleasure to commence by addressing the illness by balancing the patient's meals before treating him with

dietary supplements, and he should prescribe simple drugs before prescribing compound drugs, etcetera.

15- The physician must study the disease and decide whether it can be treated or not. For a chronic illness, the physician's input must be limited to reducing pain and suffering when possible, to isolating the disease, to limiting its damage when possible, and to reducing the possibility of its spreading to others. The physician also should respect himself and the profession and not hasten to use a futile treatment for cheap monetary gains.

16- The physician should not attempt the purgation of intemperaments or corrupt humors (*akhlãt*) before their proper maturation, instead, he must await their full coction before resorting to purgation.

17- The physician also must have knowledge of the various diseases of the hearts and souls, the wisdom to deal with them, and their effective treatments. Having such knowledge plays a major role in the healing process, particularly in dealing with emotional stress resulting from illness. Such is the accomplished physician (*hakïm*). As for a practitioner who lacks such expertise, and even if he were skilled at diagnosing the disease and prescribing the proper antidote, still, he will only be treating half of the illness. In fact, an accomplished physician, or a *tabïb kãmil*, must inquire about the condition of his patient's heart, moral standing, piety, faith, devotion, gratitude, patience, spiritual goals, attachment to the ephemeral world, love for, and longing to meet his Lord, otherwise, he is not a true physician, instead, he is a non-accomplished practitioner of the medical profession (Arb. *tabïb qãsir*). Furthermore, the best cures for people's illnesses remain in the remembrance of God Almighty, good deeds, charity, prayers, invocations of the Divine Attributes, and repentance. Such appeals have a great importance in repelling illnesses before they occur, and God willing, in effecting a cure for one's illnesses. In fact, enjoying a healthy body is better than using the best natural remedies, though all of that depends on one's psychological aptitude, faith, and willingness to hearken to the call of his Creator.

18- The physician must have compassion for the patient, and must treat him with kindness and understanding.

19- The physician must resort to natural remedies as well as spiritual ones. He must use his intelligence, psychological

techniques, spiritual and ideological resourcefulness, and even mental persuasion of the patient that he will be well, or that his affliction will shortly pass. In fact, an accomplished physician will use any permissible technique to help the recovery of his patient; and finally,

20- The physician must carry on his goal of treating the patient, pursuing the six essential prerequisites of his profession, which are: (a) cultivating the patient's present strength; (b) helping the patient regain the forfeited portion of his natural abilities as well as possible; (c) eliminating the cause of the disease when possible; (d) halting any further complications; (e) in the case of aggravated risks, choosing the lesser risk to treat the greater one; (f) and taking the course of the lesser danger to eliminate the possibility of a greater one. These six rules are the core of treating the patient. A physician who does not champion such rules is not even a physician—God knows best.

4. Pathology of a Disease

A disease goes through four pathological phases: (1) *anlage*, or the beginning of a disease; (2) pathobolism, or the progression path of a disease; (3) full maturation; and (4) its ebbing. A physician (*ṯabīb* or *ṯabā'i'i*) must give particular consideration to each one of these stages, and treat them accordingly. For instance, if at the early stages of a disease, he finds that the patient's bowel movement are slackening, he must prescribe the needed aperients and cathartics to speed coction. Otherwise, if he fails to do so at the inception of the disease for adverse reasons, he must avoid doing so when the disease is progressing. Instead, he should wait for its full maturation and stabilization before attempting purgation. This will help the body concentrate its strength at fighting the disease, and when the disease is stabilized, the physician may then pursue purgation and the elimination of the cause when the disease is weak.

5. The Ethical Physician, or *Ṯabā'i'i*

It is imperative for a skilled physician, or a *ṯabā'i'i*, to follow simple procedures before attempting complex ones, and unless he fears complications, or rapid deterioration of the patient's condition, he must prescribe simple remedies before attempting compound ones, and deal with dietary approach before prescribing drugs. Under adverse conditions, the physician must prescribe the

appropriate dosage with sensitivity, so that the body becomes less acclimatized to the drug, and more accommodative of its purpose. The physician or *ṯabã'i'i* must ascertain whether the disease is hot or cold, and he must not be tempted to experiment with any drug unless he is confident about its performance: (1) Assuming that the disease has compound symptoms, he should start with the most dominant one first. For example, when ulcer of the stomach is combined with internal inflammation, he should first work at abating the fever and inflammation before treating the ulcerous condition. (2) In another example, if he is treating *septicophlobitis*, resulting in blood putrefaction combined with acute inflammation of the veins, here again, he must abate the fever and inflammation first. (3) If he is treating a chronic illness with aggravated symptoms, he should treat the newly surging symptoms first, while being mindful of the deep-seated condition—unless the symptoms are stronger than the disease, as in the case of colibacillosis (Arb. *qawlanj*), the physician usually treats the likely colic obstruction first, otherwise, he may commence by treating the pain, then advances to treating the colic obstruction. If he can pursue a natural treatment of detoxification by abstinence from food, by fast, or rest, he should forego purgation. Like that, to sustain a condition, he must balance it with its coequal, and to improve a condition, he must treat it with its opposite.

8
On Avoiding Contagion
A Study On Apostolic Traditions

1. Leprosy

Jãbir bnu 'Abdullãh reported that a delegation from the tribe of Thuqaif came to Medina to declare its faith, and to allege its loyalty to God's path. With them, they brought a man who was afflicted with a severe and incurable leprous condition. Prior to their presenting the man before him, God's Messenger ﷺ sent a word to him, saying: "Return to your home, we have accepted your covenant." (*sahīh Muslim*)

Also in *sahīh* Muslim, Abu Huraira narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Flee from a leprous person as you do from a lion." Imam Ibn Mãja narrated in his collection of prophetic traditions that God's Messenger ﷺ even said: "Do not gaze extensively at leprous people." In another tradition narrated by Ibn 'Abbãss, God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Let the carrier of an infectious disease

not visit a healthy person." He also said: "Speak to a leprous person from a distance of one or two length of a spear."

Leprosy (*lepra*), is a contagious disease caused by extravasation of the black bile throughout the body, bringing about massive putrefaction of humors, and producing physical changes and deformation of limbs. At its peak, the disease causes ulcerous decay, canker, gnawing, and gradual disintegration of limbs. Also sometimes known as *leontiasis*, physicians attribute this name to: (1) the manifestation of leonine characteristics; (2) the fact that the disease imparts the expressions of a lion to one's face; and (3) the fact that the contagion devours whoever gets in touch with it face to face.

Physicians consider this disease hereditary, as well as dangerously infectious. One who nears a leprous person will smell an offensive odor, and a nauseating foul fetor, and it is particularly sickening for someone who already suffers from any form of pulmonary diseases.

2. The Anxiety Factor

In his perfect compassion and love for his followers, God's Messenger ﷺ advised them to avoid contact with deadly harm as a result of encroaching upon communicable diseases, and the possible corruption of their bodies and hearts. Some people are more prone than others to such diseases, having a lurking disposition and susceptibility that needs mere contact to flair and to suscitate the virus. Sometimes, apprehension hastens the spread of such infectious diseases. In fact, the psychological impact apprehension and worries have on the constitution of one's body cannot be ignored. Hence, anxiety, apprehension, and worries become dominant factors that will control one's strength and nature. Sometimes, when the stench of the illness reaches a healthy person, it causes nausea, and such stench becomes the direct transmitting agent. Still, and as we have earlier stated, the recipient must already be disposed to such reaction, and susceptible to the disease.

3. Understanding The Prophetic Guidance

God's Messenger ﷺ once married into one of the neighboring tribes, and on his wedding night, he discovered that his bride had contracted some congenital abnormality, also showing white skin pigmentations in the area of the psoas (*leukoderma*), and he asked her to return to her family. Sometimes, in their ignorance, certain individuals may dare to question the prophetic wisdom, and particularly when the prophetic incline demonstrates actions

other than what common people want to believe in, or what they want to see him doing. Other people use conflicting traditions to prove the abrogation of sensitive prophetic traditions. On this subject, Imam Tirmithi reported in his *sahih* a tradition narrated by 'Abdullãh bin Omar, God be pleased with him, that in his great compassion and love for his companions, God's Messenger ﷺ once took the hand a leprous person, placed his hand with it in a bowl of water, and prayed: "In the Name of Allah, trusting in Allah, and relying on Allah." A similar tradition was reported by Imam Ibn Mãja, and narrated by Jãbir bin 'Abdullãh. However, the authority of this tradition was considered weak, as we shall see later in this section.

In another prophetic tradition, Abu Huraira, God be pleased with him, narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "There is no contagion, and there is no superstition." Of course, this prophetic phrase could be taken out of context, and people with fragile faith, or with suspicious intentions may play with words, unfortunately, to their own detriment. Nevertheless, and by God's grace, there is no contradiction in the teachings of God's Messenger ﷺ. If one finds two opposing, though well referenced, traditions, it is possible that one of the two sayings was attributed to him by his enemies, or it could be ill-reported by the narrators, or that one of the sayings could have lost some of its references through the long chain of narrators. On the other hand, it is also possible that not every witness can understand the prophetic wisdom in the same manner, and hence, as time passes, the circumstantial evidence of his wisdom at that time can be misunderstood. This is quiet possible even when the authority of the narrator is unquestionable. However, some of the prophetic traditions did abrogate earlier ones, such as when the earlier circumstances have matured to a more receptive environment. Otherwise, the contradiction may be in the mind of the listener, and based on his level of understanding rather than on the prophetic saying itself. Anyhow, there must be one of these three explanations, otherwise, it is not possible to find two true prophetic sayings which are contradictory to one another —God forbid— it is not even conceivable for the most perfect of God's creation, whose words are the effect of divine inspiration, to have contradictory statements. If ever found, then the disease is that of lack of true knowledge, lack of proper transmission of prophetic traditions, lack of proper interpretation and understanding, or lack of understanding the Arabic language of the time, and the latter cause is very common today— God is the best Guide.

On this subject, in his book on contrarieties in the Prophetic sayings (*Ikhtilāf-ul Hadīth*), Ibn Qutaiba narrated that the enemies of the prophetic traditions once argued: "You have reported conflicting sayings. In one tradition you allege that God's Messenger ﷺ said: 'There is no contagion, and there is no superstition.' In another narration, you said that God's Messenger ﷺ said: 'Let the carrier of an infectious disease not visit a healthy person.' You have also narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ said: 'Speak to a leprous person from a distance of one or two shafts length.' And you narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ said: 'Flee from a leprous person as you do from a lion.' In another narration, you reported that when the leprous person came to offer his allegiance, that God's Messenger ﷺ sent him a message prior to his coming before him, asking him to return to his home, and that he had accepted his covenant in absentia, and all such narrations are contradictory. How can this be?"

Imam Abu Muhammad Ibn Seerīn responded to such allegations, and we also sanction his explanation that there are no contrarieties in any of the above. Each one of the above sayings relates to a specific time and circumstance. When placed in their proper context, contrariety will dissipate.

4. Sexually Transmitted Diseases

Any how, concerning the above prophetic sayings, contagion is of two kinds: (1) in the case of leprosy, it can be transmitted through contamination of the air. Hence, if one sits for a prolonged period of time, talking and breathing the surrounding polluted air of leprous environment, it is possible that he becomes infected with the disease; and (2) the second cause is sexual transmission when the leprous person engages in sexual intercourse with his wife, whereby she also may contract the disease, as well as may the potential newborn at a later stage of his life. The same possibility applies to sufferers of tuberculosis, pneumonophtitis, omphalophlebitis, or treponematosis, etcetera, besides other sexually transmittable diseases. Physicians mostly isolate patients afflicted with tuberculosis, for example, and will definitely quarantine a leprous person, and impose limited contact or even strict isolation with any such contagious disease, and in their case, many physicians today are far removed from faith or belief in superstition or bad omens, hence, they do not take such precautionary steps for mere religious reasons.

In the case of treponematosis, this disease usually befalls cattle, and produces a kind of moist mange (*psoriasis*). Regular

and prolonged contact with afflicted animals, or puddling in their infected staling will cause its spread to humans. In their case, some of the parasitics in treponematous domesticated animals, or even birds, are pathogenic to humans and they can cause syphilis and yaws. It is in this sense that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Let the carrier of an infectious disease not visit a healthy person." His advice intended that a healthy person does not have to share in the sufferings of a person afflicted with a contagious disease. In another example, God's Messenger ﷺ also hated for a healthy person to share his dwellings with an insane person, in fear that during a prolonged cohabitation, the healthy may model some of the insane's idiotic expressions and characteristics in the process of obliging for needed communications. Hence, such expressions may show lasting vestiges on the healthy person.

The example of the second kind of contagion is like that of an epidemic, or a bubonic plague, for example. In this case, God's Messenger's saying: "If you hear of a plague in a land, do not enter it, and if it occurs in a land while you are there, do not flee from it." In this sense, he feared for the people regarding the possible spread of the epidemic disease. Also, it is as though he is saying that people should not think that they can run away from God's decree, and particularly during an epidemic, for this will not necessarily save them; besides it is dangerous for others. It also means that remaining at a distance from such diseases will bring peace and comfort to one's heart, and help one further his goals.

As for his saying: "Flee from a leprous person as you do from a lion," God's Messenger ﷺ gave such advice as a broad preventive rule and a standard precautionary step. As for eating with a leprous person, he did so to demonstrate that it is not a forbidden act. Some scholars explained that these two traditions indicate particular circumstances, and not a general rule. As for his saying: "There is no contagion, and there is no superstition," we explained earlier that this saying is taken out of context unless one understands the circumstances concerning which it was said. In fact, this particular prophetic saying was pronounced concerning superstitious minds, and relating to putting the blame for one's own faults on people's evil eye.

God's Messenger ﷺ said: "I was sent as a teacher." Thus, as a teacher, he spoke to each person according to his level of understanding. Some people have stronger faith than others, and their trust and reliance on God's protection and guidance can help them overcome contagion as well as many adverse conditions. Their faith is like that of a healthy young body; whenever a virus

penetrates it, the body's natural defenses immediately strike back and eliminate it. Other people may not be able to absorb the same. Their understanding may be less keen. Hence, God's Messenger ﷺ spoke to them by cautioning them regarding preventive health measures. In fact, God's Messenger ﷺ himself adopted the two points of view to show an example the believers can follow, and to lessen the burden on those who possess lesser grasp of his traditions. Both traditions are correct. One is meant for a strong believer, and the other for a believer whose faith is weaker. Each one will have his own example to follow and proof to sustain. The same is understood when God's Messenger ﷺ applied cauterization under adverse circumstances, although he did recommend restraint in using this kind of medical procedure. There are several coherent examples of the above which one may find in the prophetic traditions. If one is gifted with such wisdom and can rightly understand himself—when he renders each case the proper treatment, he may save himself from many critical arguments, and avoid conflict.

Another group of critics argue that shunning contact with people afflicted with contagious diseases is a natural human reaction to avoid potential danger. Hence, to confine contagion, they advise to avoid touching, and to limit mixing in and breathing the contaminated air which surrounds the sick person until he recovers. However, limited contact, or even eating once in a while with the sick by his nurse or physician is necessary, even limited contact following the correct hygienic code by a family member provides psychological benefits and a sense of caring, and does not necessarily transmit the disease. Thus, when God's Messenger ﷺ advised against confining oneself with a person who is carrying an infectious disease, he meant to control the spread of a disease, and particularly the most infectious type. However, here again, some types of plagues are not transmissible through air, sharing food, or touch, and not all sufferers carry an endemic disease. Some are infected, then treated, thus putting a halt to any further development of the disease, and controlling its spread in their own body. Hence, since the sufferer struggles to treat his illness, and to bear his affliction with patience and gratitude to his Lord, it is more sensible for him to care not to spread his sufferings to others.

A third group of critics contend that in ignorance, during the time of paganism (*jãhiliyya*), people believed that a contagious disease spreads on its own, and without God's input. For this purpose, God's Messenger ﷺ had to abolish such false beliefs, and hence shared food with a leprous person to elucidate this

point, and to teach the people that Allah is the One Who controls sickness and brings about recovery. On the other hand, when God's Messenger ﷺ advised against such contact, in his saying "From contact comes destruction;" he elucidated that contact is one of the agencies God Almighty created as a potential transmitter of disease. Hence, the proof of such cause is in his advice, and the proof of God's control over everything, and the proof that no disease can issue on its own, or disseminate as it pleases, was established through his eating with the leprous person. Not even a single virus has control over its own movements. Allah is the Creator and Controller of everything. If He pleases, He has full control, and the power to strip anything of its rudimentary attributes, and if He pleases, it will function according to the design He originally created for it.

A fourth group of scholars contend that the later prophetic sayings abrogate and supersede the earlier ones. This process is called *naskh* in Arabic. Thus, they look into the date and establish references of each tradition before they consider which one to adhere to. Others argue that some prophetic traditions must be observed anyhow, and regardless of their precedence, and whether they fall into the branch of *naskh* or not. Their argument issues from Abu Huraira's narration of the prophetic saying: "There is no contagion, and there is no superstition." Initially, Abu Huraira, God be pleased with him, narrated the tradition, and it appears that at a later date, he forgot how it was exactly spoken by God's Messenger ﷺ. When the people went to him inquiring about it and said: "We heard you saying...," he abstained from rehearsing it before them. Abu Salma commented on Abu Huraira's subsequent position by saying: "I cannot ascertain whether Abu Huraira forgot it, or whether it was abrogated by a later tradition." As for the tradition narrated by Jãbir that God's Messenger ﷺ took the hand a leprous person, placed his hand with it in a bowl of water, and prayed... Imam al-Tirmithi refuted this narration, and called it untrue or strange (*gharib*). Imam al-Tirmithi added and properly referenced the same tradition being enacted by Omar bin Al-Khattãb, God be pleased with him, and not God's Messenger ﷺ— God knows best.

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9
Interdiction of Prescribing What Is Deemed Impure

Abi-Dardā' narrated[1] that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "It is Allah that created the disease and the cure, and He made a cure for every disease. Make use of medicine, but do not treat your illnesses with what is unlawful." In the same strain, Imam Bukhāri narrated in his book of correct prophetic traditions[2] that Ibn Mas'oud reported God's Messenger as saying: "Allah did not make your recovery from illnesses with what He otherwise made forbidden." Abu Huraira also reported that God's Messenger ﷺ forbade the use of cacoethic medicines. In another narration,[3] Tāriq bin Suwayd al-Ja'afi asked about the benefits of using wine (khamr) in medicine, and God's Messenger ﷺ replied: "It is not a cure, but a disease." In *sunan* al-Nisā'i, it is reported that an Arab physician mentioned the use of a frog in medicinal preparations, and God's Messenger ﷺ forbid killing it for such purpose. In another tradition, God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Whosoever uses wine to treat his illness, may Allah not give him recovery."

Treating illnesses with cacoethic and impure medicines is an abominable action, both by reason or common sense, and according to Islamic jurisprudence. As for the prescribed laws, we have already cited a few of the prophetic sayings on this subject. As for common sense (*'aql*), indeed, God Almighty forbade the use of things impure because they are malignant and cacoethic, while He never forbade the believers anything good, or restricted them something beneficial as punishment for their sins. Thus, He ordained what is beneficial, and forbade what is harmful, and such prohibition is made for people's own benefit, and to protect them from greater ills. Thus, it is not befitting a believer to seek recovery from diseases with what is deemed harmful, even if such substance can bring about a temporary relief, for the greater damage will surely follow. Another aspect of harm which must be tallied here relates to the purity of the believer's heart. In essence, the cacoethic attributes of what is forbidden may perhaps relieve one aspect of the physical illness, though its malignancy will surely pervade one's heart to generate new diseases, and be the direct cause of one's spiritual fall, for he would have certainly strayed, his intention wavered, and his focus fluctuated.

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1 Sunan Abu Dāwoud; Sahīh Bukhāri.
2 Sahīh Bukhāri
3 Sahīh Muslim

The truth is that God Almighty's commands must unquestionably be obeyed, and what He forbade must be avoided in every possible way. If what He forbade was anything other than portentous and foreboding, He would not have forbidden it, for He has created this world for His creation to flourish and to berth therein for an appointed time. God Almighty is the Supreme Legislator, and when He, in His divine wisdom, grants guidance to His creation, He would have indeed helped them distinguish good from evil. On the other hand, the human body and soul will certainly react to any impure substance. Hence, when it is portentous and foreboding, such attributes will definitely beleaguer one's being. Whatever evil they carry will control him and manifest as him. This is why God made some food, drink, and clothing forbidden for they will expose their carrier as nefarious, and He made other food, drink, and clothing permissible, for they demonstrate the servant's piety and devotion to his Lord.

The other aspect of such nefariousness and ungodliness will manifest in one's weakness, attachment to, and constant demand for such unlawful substances, and particularly when an immature mind and a blinded heart thinks that such substance is good for it, or that it will cure its ills. However, the Divine and Supreme Legislator countered such unfounded pretexts by providing the proper and correct cure, and He provided the needed guidance to reach it. Therefore, God Almighty gave clear evidence of what is permissible and what is forbidden, and no one can deny that. Hence, since killing a frog for medicine is unlawful, and several of their species are even poisonous, then how can the mother of cacothenicism and malignancy be good? How can alcohol be a cure? God Almighty has never intended it for a cure. In fact, it is widely known that alcohol and wine affect the brain and the functions of one's central nervous system. Both physicians and theologians agree on that. Even Hippocrate spoke of alcoholism as one of the extremely damaging diseases, adding that 'alcohol is an idioblapstic and self-injuring disease that can become chronic.' In fact, the effect of alcohol rises fast to the brain, it alters the level of humoral density (*akhlāt*) and causes them to buoy up. It impedes one's memory, affects one's discrimination, and tilts one's balance. The author of the Liber Regius (*al-kāmil*), adds that alcohol damages the brain and the nerves.

As for other prohibited medicines, they are of two kinds: (1) one that is taken voluntarily, though the body rejects it, such as poisons, venine, any theriacum that contains the flesh of a snake, or similar coprophobic substances that will ultimately remain

integral, insoluble, and become a disease instead of a cure; and (2) the second kind causes cibophobic reaction and disgust, such as specially mixed drinks with offensive smell, or any other medicines whose consequential damage is greater than their benefits, such as the anesthesia given to a pregnant women before delivery. Both, innate and common sense agree with religious jurisprudence in this regard.

In essence, there is a subtle divine kindness in what God Almighty made as cure, including the particular blessings contained in what He made permissible, for the best cure is what is blessed, and such cure the body will readily accept. The same thing applies to blessed people, for wherever they may be, others will benefit from them, their knowledge, and their company. The mere fact that a Muslim recognizes what is permissible in medicine will bring him its benefits. The greater the servant's faith in his Lord and Cherisher, the easier it is for him to discard what is unlawful. Should one utilize such medicines regardless of his knowledge of their impermissibility, then they will surely generate a disease, except when one neglects his own repulsive feelings towards such medicines, or contradicts his innate phobic reaction to such substances and to their cacothenic or degenerative nature and replaces it, in his mind, with love for it. However, a true believer will never do that—God knows best.

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Treatment of Head Lice

It is narrated in the two books of correct prophetic traditions (*s̲ah̲ïh̲ Muslim and s̲ah̲ïh̲ Buk̲h̲ãri*) that Ka'ab ibn 'Ajra came to God's Messenger ﷺ suffering from head lice. God's Messenger ﷺ said to him: "Indeed, you have suffered so much!" In another narration, it is reported that God's Messenger ﷺ asked him to shave his head, and to feed up to six people, or to sacrifice a sheep in charity, or to fast for three days.

Earlier in this book, we discussed the treatment of lice with honey. Lice (Arb. *qaml*), are wingless insects that imbed themselves in the roots of hair, and they grow as parasites on their host. Lice lay oval-shaped eggs called nits that hatch within one week and attach themselves to the base of the hair follicles. Lice spread easily from one person to another, specially in crowded and unsanitary conditions. When feasting on blood putrefaction, the complication

of their infestation also may develop a systemic disease that produces pathogenic microorganisms that add to the blood's toxicity, a condition known as *septicemia*. Somehow, children are more prone to such infestation because of excess moisture caused by their playing and mixing in possibly polluted environments. This explains why God's Messenger ﷺ initially recommended shaving the head to eliminate harmful vapors that would otherwise congest over the scalp, and hinder the breathing of the pores and perhaps cause infection of follicles. Once shaved, the pores will open, and such harmful vapors will be emitted to allow a natural cleansing process. After shaving the head, and to affect complete delousing, one should apply a solution of cayenne pepper in vinegar to the scalp, or apply elder bark soaked in vinegar, and either of the two infusions will cause lice to dislodge before washing them away, or one may add oil of rue to the mixture to kill any newly hatched eggs, or apply an infusion of crushed Colombian seeds directly to the infected area.



Part II
Spiritual Medicine

PART II
SPIRITUAL MEDICINE
SIMPLE AND COMPOUND

1.1 TREATING THE VICTIM OF A MALEVOLENT EVIL EYE

Imam Muslim reported in his sahĩh from Ibn 'Abbãss's narration that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "The malevolent evil eye is a fact. If there were anything faster than fate (*qadar*), the malevolent evil eye would lead it." Also in the same collection of correct prophetic traditions, Anas reported that God's Messenger ﷺ gave permission for people to carry an amulet (*ruqya*) to avert the possible malevolence of the evil eye, its subsequent fever, and from eczema (*namla*). Averting the malevolence of the evil eye also can be done by regularly reciting particular Qur'anic verses against such misguided evil eye. This is also called *ruqya*. Imam Abu Dãwoud reported in his *sunan* that 'Aisha, God be pleased with her, said that God's Messenger ﷺ used to order someone who stares at another person with the malevolence of the evil eye to take an ablution, and the water of his ablution be poured over the other person.

Sufyãn bin 'Uyiyna narrated that Asmã Bint 'Umays said: "O God's Messenger, the family of Bani Ja'afar seems to be constantly struck by the malevolent influence of the evil eye (*'ayn*). Pray for them." He replied: "Indeed. If there were anything faster than fate, the malevolent eye would lead it." (*Reported by Imam Tirmithi*).

Imam Tirmithi also reported the narration of Abi Imama bin Sahil ibn Hanĩf who said: "Once 'Ãmir bin Rabĩ'a saw Sahil bathing, and he commented: 'I have never seen exposed (among Arabs) such fine fair skin.' Sahil immediately fell to the ground unconscious. God's Messenger ﷺ was called in. When he arrived, and upon hearing people's account, he became disgusted as he commented: 'Why would any one of you kill his brother (with his eyes)? He then turned to 'Ãmir bin Rabĩ'a and said: 'Take an ablution and wash your brother with its water.' 'Ãmir did so, and immediately sat to wipe Sahil's face, hands, forearms, knees, and feet. He then took a cup of that water, entered it under Sahil's garment, and poured it, and he then poured the rest of the ablution water over Sahil's head. Shortly after that, Sahil woke up and regained consciousness."

Imam al-Tirmithi commented on the proper procedure for lifting the influence of such evil eye, saying: "The person of malevolent eye must be ordered to take an ablution, and such water be collected in a bowl. He then must immerse his right hand in it, bring forth some water, rinse his mouth, and emit the water back into the bowl before he washes the face of his victim. He should then immerse his left hand in the same bowl, bring forth some water in a small cup and pour it on the victim's left knee. Following that, he should immerse his left hand in the bowl, bring forth some water in the same cup and pour it on the victim's right knee. He then should pour more water under the victim's garment. Finally, he must splash another cup of water over the vertex area of his victim from behind in one motion. It is important here that the cup not be placed on the floor in-between these phases.

1.2 Kinds of Evil Eye

There are two kinds of evil or malevolent eye: (1) human eye; and (2) jinn eye. On this subject, it is related that God's Messenger ﷺ saw in Asmã's house a girl-servant with a penetrating stare on her face (*'ayn*), and he commented: "She has the evil eye (*sa'afa*). Make her take the ritual ablution (*ruqya*)." Al-Hussain bin Mas'oud al-Farrã' elucidated the Prophet's saying: "Sa'afa means possessed by the evil eye of jinn—meaning that she is struck by the malevolent influence of the evil eye of jinn, which is said to be more injurious than the pierce of an enemy's spear." Jãbir further commented that the evil eye can lead one to his grave, and fit a camel in a cooking pot."

Abi Sa'ïd al-Khidri narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ used to regularly seek refuge in God Almighty from the evil eye of jinn and that of humans. However, a group of unlucky Muslims who have little wisdom and understanding still deny the existence of the evil eye and claim it to be mere imagination, evil presentiments, and conjecture. Of course, such people have the least wisdom, they hearken little, and they understand less. They are also the farthest from the truth, the most dull, the most blinded by the veils of separation from their Lord, and the farthest from the true knowledge of the souls and spirits, their nature, capabilities, and influences. Even the leaders and wise people of most nations on earth, and regardless of their religious beliefs and traditions, do not deny the existence of the evil eye, though they may dispute its cause and degree of influence.

1.3 Sources of The Evil Eye

Among them, one group contends that the malevolent evil eye originates from one's own evil disposition, one's own susceptibility to evil thinking, one's own temptations, liking to experiment and experience things even if they are pernicious to one's own well being, and one's flirtation with prurient and evil thoughts, and indulgence in evil actions. Out of such a person, a stream of malignant radiating energies are beamed from his eyes, and instantly affect his victims. Another group comments that the above explanation is reasonable and is similar to the same lethal energy some snakes emit when they look at their prey, and the victim instantly freezes, and sometimes immediately dies of a heart attack. The same energy phenomenon is also found in several kinds of precious stones, gems, elixirs, and other minerals, whereby, they emit unmistakably strong energies, or radiations; some of these are lethal, and others may induce calm, passivity, apathy, inertia, submission, exertion, anxiety, fright, craving, habituation, withdrawal, or devastation, etcetera.

Another group of thinkers contend that upon effectuations, God Almighty causes whatever results He wills, whether beneficial or harmful, for He alone governs the destiny of good and evil. According to them, this is accomplished instantly when the possessor of such malevolent evil eye sets his penetrating gaze on any one or anything that may seem to nurture his or her evil nature. The malevolent energies will then penetrate the victim through the pores of his own skin and upset his natural balance. The possessor of such evil eye is only a transmitter, and has no power or influence on his own, nor can he initiate such actions, since he himself is effected with such evil. However, this opinion remains as the opinion of those who do not believe in the validity of the innate forces God Almighty embedded in each cell of the creation throughout the entire universes. Some energies He kept suppressed or dormant until they are discovered, and others He made constant and active. Hence, such thinkers have definitely obscured their own vision, limited their scope of understanding of their own surroundings, and their ability to correctly interact with their environment. Furthermore, they have definitely contradicted common sense and the acceptable opinions of the learned ones. In fact, there is no doubt that God Almighty has created innate forces, energies and characteristics in each and every element. Some He made constant, and others variable. In fact, no one with a thinking brain can deny the common effects of souls and spirits on the

human body. They are even material any one can see and sometime feel. Take for example blushing when meeting a respected person, or saying something one may be ashamed of, or finding one's face turning yellow when he meets something or someone he fears, and of course people sometimes recognize feeling sick or losing strength after meeting someone, or listening to an admonition, or even feeling sexual. All that is done through perceiving something, or being subject to the 'intention' of someone else, who effectively expresses his or her intentions through their eyes.

Thus, one may be effected through others' eyes, which is in fact the proof of a strong connection between their spirits, souls, and eyes. The eyes themselves have nothing to do with it—it is the soul and the spirit that carry such influence. Each soul and spirit carries its own innate influences, strength, mediums, basic characteristics, and nature. For instance a jealous person can definitely harm his victim, and that is why God Almighty commanded His Messenger ﷺ to seek refuge in Him from the power of harm He alone controls, and He commanded him to seek refuge in Him from any harm a jealous person may direct towards him. In fact, the harm of a jealous person effecting his victim can only be denied by someone who is blind to human nature.

In fact, a jealous human nature is an inner sickness that takes the shape of a jealous and angry ghost inside oneself. It invades the gullible and unsuspecting victim, and acts in concert with its innate evil characteristics. Similar to that is the example of a venomous snake. Its venom resides dormant in its fangs, and upon seeing its potential victim, the snake is suddenly seized with a fit of rage and anger, as if it becomes possessed, and immediately, the venom gushes forth upon the snake's biting of its victim. The venom is then released to inject and kill the victim. This is why some people associate a malicious, spiteful, and jealous person with a snake. Thus, jealousy is a great hidden evil. Sometimes it can even effect a miscarriage, and at other times it can cause blindness. This is why God's Messenger ﷺ once used the analogy of a rattlesnake, a viper (*echis*),[1] and the African puff adder (*Bitis arietans*),[2] to mean that they can cause a miscarriage, or even blindness.

Other kinds of spiteful and sick beings can affect their victims by merely looking at them, and without any physical contact because of their high level of venomous spitefulness, their ill nature, and

[1] Arb. Abtar.

[2] Arb. Thu-tafyatain.

the bad energies they carry. Thus, the malevolence of the evil eye does not necessarily need to culminate in physical contact to take effect, as some people who understand little about the laws of physics and divine jurisprudence (*Sharī'a*) may contend. In fact, such injuries can occur either through direct contact, direct confrontation, meeting eyeball to eyeball, or through extrasensory psychic messages, whereby the spirit of the possessor of evil eye acts as an agency that travels to meet the victim and effect his condition. At other times, the damage can be caused through the mental power of the possessor of an evil eye, or even through reciting special prayers, insinuations, incantations, or by even flirting with one's imagination. It is also possible to curb someone's ill intent by countering it, and by reversing such ill intent through reciting adverse prayers upon perceiving such vibrations, or even upon suspecting such possibilities. Hence, by successfully reversing the course of the evil eye, the inceptor himself becomes the victim of his own initiative. Otherwise, one may protect himself from such evil by oft-reciting prayers for his own protection against the evil eye.

The influence and malevolence of the evil eye do not necessarily need direct eye contact. The spiteful and sick person may be even blind, and when someone else describes a specific condition, property, instance, or a person to him, his evil thoughts can produce the same effect as does eye contact. In many instances, the harm caused by the evil eye is transmitted through a third party who is told about an instance, a property, or a person, his richness, strength, good health, spirit, successful business, or travel plans, etcetera.

On this subject, God Almighty said to His Messenger ﷺ: ❮ The unbelievers would almost trip you up with their eyes when they hear the Message ❯ (*Qur'an 68:51*). He also told him: ❮ Say: I seek refuge in the Lord of the dawn from the evil of His creation; from any evil darkness may conceal; from the evil of those who practice secret arts; and from the evil of an envious one when he exhibits envy ❯ (*Qur'an 113*).

Thus, every possessor of the evil eye is a jealous person, but not every jealous person has an evil eye. Since jealous people are more common than the possessors of the evil eye, seeking refuge in God Almighty from a jealous person includes the possessors of the evil eye. In their case, evil is projected from their eyes as the invisible arrows of their envy. As for the victims, sometimes the arrows of jealousy and envy hit them, and at other times

they miss. When such arrows find the target person unprotected and unshielded, they definitely effect him. However, if the arrows of jealousy and envy find the target person vigilant, armed, and wearing a seamless and impenetrable coat of mail, they will not effect him. Instead, they may even bounce back to hit and harm the person who launched them, and who then becomes the victim of the evil he concocted. This is exactly like an archer and his targets. One kind is the archery of the minds and spirits, and the other is the archery of bodies and shadows.

The root of jealousy and envy arises from looking at something, liking it, hating to see it the prize of someone else, and desiring it for oneself. This is usually followed by one's sick and envious evil spirit pursuing the potential victim, then injecting its venomous rays, or subliminal messages, by staring at him with spite. Sometimes, one may intentionally nurture the evil spirit he carries. At other times, he may do so involuntarily, or even subconsciously, for jealousy may be his second nature. In fact, this is the worst kind of human being. Some Muslim scholars even contend that when a person is known to have spiteful, malevolent, and evil nature, he should be segregated from the society, and to eliminate the spread of his evil, the government should provide for his basic sustenance until he dies.

1.4 Treating The Victim of Evil Eye[1]

In essence, the prophetic guidance is intended to treat this illness, and it provides for different methods of treatments. On this subject, Imam Abu Dãwoud narrated in his *sunan* that Sahil bin Hanïf said: "I once passed with a group of people by a water fall. I went and took a bath therein, and when I came out, I was struck with a serious fever." When the case was brought before God's Messenger ﷺ, he commented: "Ask Abu Thãbit[2] to recite verses of seeking the shield of God's protection (*ta'weetha*). Someone asked: "What about regularly carrying an amulet—would he benefit from that?" God's Messenger ﷺ replied: "Amulets are beneficial against the evil eye, fever, and venomous stings."

Evil eye is also known as *nafs* in Arabic—thus associating between the evil eye and one's innate evil nature, or the 'self', while the venomous sting means a scorpion's sting, or a similar one. Among the common prayers of soliciting a permanent shield of protection is to regularly recite the two guardian chapters (*al-Mu'awwithatain*). These are Chapter 113 from the holy *Qur'an*,

[1] Arb. 'Ã'in.

[2] That is his patronym.

cited hereinabove, Chapter 114 which reads as follows: ❮ Say: I seek the protection of the Creator and Sustainer of humankind, the Sovereign King of humankind, the only God of Humankind, from the insinuator of devilish thoughts, who withdraws and shrivels when God's Name is mentioned, and who spreads evil whispers in people's hearts, whether he comes from among the humans or jinn ❯ (*Qur'an*), the Opening Chapter 1, which reads as follows: ❮ In the Name of Allah, the Merciful and Compassionate. All praises be to God, the Creator and Sustainer of universes. The Most Merciful and Compassionate. Lord of the Day of Judgement. Thee we worship, and Thy help we seek. Guide us on the straight path. The path of those Thou blessed, not the accursed, nor the heedless ❯ (*Qur'an*), and the Verse of the Divine Throne, which reads as follows: ❮ Allah. There is no god except Him. The Ever Living, the Sovereign Controller He is not subject to slumber nor rest. To Him belongs what the heavens and the earth hold. Who is there to intercede before Him except as He permits. He knows what is awaiting people, and what they have left behind them. They encompass naught of His knowledge except as He wills. His Throne controls the heavens and the earth, and it does not weary Him to preserve them, for He is the Most Exalted and Magnificent ❯ (*Qur'an 2:255*).

Besides these holy Qur'anic verses, one also may recite prophetic prayers, such as:

1- "I seek the protection of Allah's perfect words against any evil that may spur from His creation."

أَعُوذُ بِكَلِمَاتِ اللّٰهِ التَّامَةِ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا خَلَقْ

2- "I seek refuge in Allah's perfect words against any Satan, disturbances, or worries, and against any censuring eye."

أَعُوذُ بِكَلِمَاتِ اللّٰهِ التَّامَةِ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْطَانٍ وَهَامَّةٍ
وَمِنْ كُلِّ عَيْنٍ لاَمَّةٍ

3- "I seek refuge in the castle of Allah's perfect words, which neither a pious nor a sacrilegious person can trespass, from any evil that may spur from what He created, scaled, sustains, and further brings back for judgement; from what descends from the firmament and what ascends onto them; from any danger He placed on earth, and any harm it may cause; from the trials of the night and the day; from any visitation in the dark or the light, except for a visiting carrier of glad tidings from my Merciful Lord."

أَعُوذُ بِكَلِمَاتِ اللهِ التَّامَّاتِ الَّتِي لاَ يَتَجَاوَزُهُنَّ بِرٌّ وَلاَ فَاجِرٌ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ وَذَرَأَ وَبَرَأَ وَمِنْ شَرِّ مَا يَنْزِلُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَمِنْ شَرِّ مَا يَعْرُجُ فِيهَا وَمِنْ شَرِّ مَا ذَرَأَ فِي الأَرْضِ وَمِنْ شَرِّ مَا يَخْرُجُ مِنْهَا وَمِنْ شَرِّ فِتَنِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَمِنْ شَرِّ طَوَارِقِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ إِلاَّ طَارِقًا بِخَيْرٍ يَا رَحْمَنُ

4- "I seek refuge in Allah's perfect words from His wrath and punishment; from any evil which is spurred by His creation; and from the evil insinuations of the devils, or their nearing of my presence."

أَعُوذُ بِكَلِمَاتِ اللهِ التَّامَّةِ مِنْ غَضَبِهِ وَعِقَابِهِ وَمِنْ شَرِّ عِبَادِهِ وَمِنْ هَمَزَاتِ الشَّيَاطِينِ وَأَنْ يَحْضُرُونِ

5- "Lord, I seek refuge in Thy gracious Countenance and Thy perfect words from the evil of creation whose final bounds Thou alone control. Lord, Thou alone has the power to lift adversities, and reverse injustices. Lord, Thy soldiers are infallible, and Thy promise does not fail. Glory be to Thee, and to Thee all praises are due."

اَللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِوَجْهِكَ الْكَرِيمِ وَكَلِمَاتِكَ التَّامَّاتِ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا أَنْتَ آخِذٌ بِنَاصِيَتِهِ، اللَّهُمَّ أَنْتَ تَكْشِفُ الْمَأْثَمَ وَالْمَغْرَمَ، اَللَّهُمَّ لاَ يُهْزَمُ جُنْدُكَ وَلاَ يُخْلَفُ وَعْدُكَ سُبْحَانَكَ وَبِحَمْدِكَ

6- "I seek refuge in God's magnificent and most glorious Countenance, and I seek protection in the sanctity of His perfect words which neither a pious nor a sacrilegious person can trespass—I seek refuge in Allah's holy attributes, those Names I know, and those I do not know, from any evil that may spur from what He created, scaled, sustains, and further brings back for judgement; from the harm of any evil I cannot bear, and from all evil, and from the creation whose final bounds Thou alone control. Surely my Lord is on a straight path."

أَعُوذُ بِوَجْهِ اللهِ الْعَظِيمِ الَّذِي لاَ شَيْءَ أَعْظَمَ مِنْهُ وَبِكَلِمَاتِهِ التَّامَّاتِ الَّتِي لاَ يَتَجَاوَزُهُنَّ بِرٌّ وَلاَ فَاجِرٌ وَأَسْمَاءِ اللهِ الْحُسْنَى مَا عَلِمْتُ مِنْهَا وَمَا لَمْ أَعْلَمْ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ وَذَرَأَ وَبَرَأَ وَمِنْ شَرِّ كُلِّ ذِي شَرٍّ لاَ أُطِيقُ

شَرِّهِ وَمِنْ شَرِّ كُلِّ ذِي شَرٍ أَنْتَ آخِذٌ بِنَاصِيَتِهِ إِنَّ رَبِّي عَلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ

7- "Lord, Thou art my only Sustainer. In Thee I trust, and Thou art the Lord of the Magnificent Divine Throne. What Allah wills shall be, and what He does not will shall not. Truly, there is no power or will except by Allah. I know, and I bear witness that Allah has the power and supremacy over all things. His knowledge encompasses everyone and everything, and He alone knows the count of each and every one in the entire creation. Lord, I seek refuge in Thee from my own evil, and from the evil of the accursed Satan, his polytheism, and I seek refuge in Thee from the evil of whatever walks on this earth, and what exists beneath it—all of the creation, whose final bounds Thou alone control. Surely my Lord is on a straight path."

اَللّٰهُمَّ أَنْتَ رَبِّي لاَ إِلٰهَ إِلاَّ أَنْتَ عَلَيْكَ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَأَنْتَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ مَا شَاءَ اللّٰهُ كَانَ وَمَالَمْ يَشَأْ لَمْ يَكُنْ وَلاَحَوْلَ وَلاَ قُوَّةَ إِلاَّ بِاللّٰهِ أَعْلَمُ أَنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ وَأَنَّ اللّٰهَ قَدْ أَحَاطَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا وَأَحْصَى كُلَّ شَيْءٍ عَدَدًا اَللّٰهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرِّ نَفْسِي وَشَرِّ الشَّيْطَانِ وَشِرْكِهِ وَمِنْ شَرِّ كُلِّ دَابَّةٍ أَنْتَ آخِذٌ بِنَاصِيَتِهَا إِنَّ رَبِّي عَلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ

8- "I seek shelter in the Magnificent Lord. There is no God other than Him. He is truly my God, and the Lord of everything. I seek shelter in my Sustainer and the Sustainer of everything. I place my trust in the living Lord Who does not die. I ward off all evil by the all-pervading might of 'there is no will or power except by Allah." Sufficient for me is Allah, and He is the best of guardians. Sufficient for me is my Sustainer and the sole Sustainer of the entire existence. It is better to receive my needs from the supreme Provider than to receive them from His dependents. It is better to seek the pleasure of the Creator than that of the creation. Sufficient for me is my Sustainer. Sufficient for me is the sole Controller of the entire universes. He alone saves, and no one can stand up to Him. Sufficient for me is Allah's hearing of my prayers, and He alone has the power to fulfill them. Indeed, Allah is the supreme goal, and there is nothing beyond Him. Allah is sufficient for me. In Him I place my trust, and indeed He is the Lord of the Magnificent Divine Throne."

تَحَصَّنْتُ بِاللّٰهِ الَّذِي لاَ إِلَهَ إِلاَّ هُوَ إِلَهِي وَإِلَهُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ
وَاعْتَصَمْتُ بِرَبِّي وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ حَسْبِيَ الرَّبُّ مِنَ الْعِبَادِ
حَسْبِيَ الْخَالِقُ مِنَ الْمَخْلُوقِ حَسْبِيَ الرَّزَّاقُ مِنَ الْمَرْزُوقِ
حَسْبِيَ الَّذِي هُوَ حَسْبِي الَّذِي بِيَدِهِ مَلَكُوتُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ
وَهُوَ يُجِيرُ وَلاَ يُجَارُ عَلَيْهِ حَسْبِيَ اللّٰهُ وَكَفَى سَمِعَ اللّٰهُ
لِمَنْ دَعَا لَيْسَ وَرَاءَ اللّٰهِ مَرْمَى حَسْبِيَ اللّٰهُ لاَ إِلَهَ إِلاَّ هُوَ
عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَهُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ

There is no doubt that whoever has tried any of the above prayers has benefited from them, and perhaps understood their value and the dire need to invoke them regularly. Such unique, effective, and blessed prayers have the power to ward off any harm intended by the malevolent evil eye. However, it all depends on the level of one's faith, the strength of his determination, his constant vigilance, his unwavering trust in his Lord, and the degree of certitude and balance of his heart, for all of the above are weapons, and the effectiveness of weapons depends on their user.

1.5 Preventing Harm-Causing To Others

When a person suspects himself of possessing the malevolent evil eye, and fears causing accidental harm to others with his involuntary nature, then, upon seeing something, or someone, he should pray: "Lord, bless what he has." This tradition was learned when 'Ãmir bin Rabï'a effected Sahil bin Hanïf with his malevolent eye. God's Messenger ﷺ then said to him: "Won't you invoke a blessing (for your brother)?" Meaning, won't you say 'Lord, bless what he has.' Hishãm bin 'Urwa narrated that when his father saw something he liked, or when he entered someone's house or plantation fields, he used to pray: "Only what Allah decrees shall be. Surely there is no sovereign power except that of Allah."

مَا شَاءَ اللّٰهُ وَلاَ حَوْلَ وَلاَ قُوَّةَ إِلاَّ بِاللّٰهِ

One also may invoke such prayers upon seeing something he likes, or someone whose luck in this world he may envy.

Also narrated in the correct prophetic tradition is the prayer (*ruqya*) of God's archangel Gabriel, upon whom be peace, who recited a special prayer for the protection of God's Messenger ﷺ, saying: "I shield you by Allah's Name from any harm that may affect you, and from any malevolent nature, being, or straying

jealous eye. Verily, Allah is the One Who heals, and to the supreme guardianship of His Name I entrust you." (*Narrated in sahih Muslim*)

بِسْمِ اللهِ أَرْقِيْكَ مِنْ كُلِّ دَاءٍ يُؤْذِيْكَ مِنْ شَرِّ كُلِّ نَفْسٍ
أَوْعَيْنِ حَاسِدٍ. اللهُ يُشْفِيْكَ بِسْمِ اللهِ أَرْقِيْكَ

When they recognized such sickness in someone's nature, and in order to curtail any potential harm to others, some shaikhs even went to the extent of recommending that specific Qur'anic verses, including all of the above-cited verses, be written and the paper soaked in water, and further given to the carrier of the malevolent evil eye to drink. The Muslim thinker Mujãhid commented on this practice by saying: "There is no objection to writing Qur'anic verses, washing the contents in water, and giving it to the sick person (*'ã'in*) to drink."[1]

One can find similar utilizations in a variety of traditions, including the narration of Abi Qalãba that Ibn 'Abbãss, God be pleased with him, recommended the writing of specific Qur'anic verses for the benefit of a barren woman, to solicit the Divine favor for her to bear children. In another tradition, Ayyoub reported that he saw Abi Qalãba write a specific Qur'anic verse, soak the paper in water, and give it to a sick person to drink, to lessen, and God willing, alleviate his pain and sufferings.

1.6 The Benefits of Ablution In The Treatment of A Jealous Person

What is consistent in the above narrations is that the carrier of the malevolent evil eye (*'ã'in*) is definitely a sick person, and if he is truly a believer, he must be treated, and he should submit himself to the correct kind of treatment.

The second prophetic method mentioned in the above tradition: "Take an ablution and wash your brother with its water," and as described by Imam al-Tirmithi to eliminate the influence of the evil eye, this practice deals with three aspects: (1) ceremonial purity (*ghusul*) for the assailant (*'ã'in*); (2) suggestive therapy for both the assailant and the victim; and (3) shock therapy for the victim, using the element of surprise to release the patient's tension in the case of convulsion or coma.

[1] For this practice, we recommend the use of a nontoxic paper, using water soluble, vegetable nutrient for writing the suggested verses. Before drinking the water, and when the paper is taken out of it, usually, there are no writings left on it.

This is done by ceremoniously entering one's hand under the patient's garment and pouring a cup of the water of the assailant's ablution, before splashing another cup over his head from behind as an element of surprise. Such treatment is deemed correct and beneficial in the case of convulsion or coma, though not every physician agrees with it, and regardless of their inferences, usually such treatment proves practical. In fact, what some common physicians may mock, or consider void of what they regard as scientific proof, may only be the proof of deficiency in their own knowledge about human intemperaments, and definitely their lack of faith and proper understanding of the divinely established laws of cause and effect. Nevertheless, balanced minds will agree with the effectiveness of such treatment. This is understood by acknowledging that the venom of a snake resides in its own flesh, and hence, the treatment of a hot tempered person is in cooling his anger, and quelling its fire by reaching out to him, caressing his head or shoulder, and showing love and concern for his condition. This is like facing someone who wants to throw fire at you, whereas, you can extinguish it by splashing back a bucket of water while the fire is still in his hand, and before the fire reaches you. This is merely common sense.

This is why God's Messenger ﷺ asked the carrier of jealous nature to pray: "Lord, bless what he has." This is to repel the effects of one's own sickness through prayers. This is in fact what is called cognizance (*ihsãn*) of one's own sickness, and seeking a cure for it, and as we have discussed in earlier chapters, each illness must be met with its antidote. Hence, since this type of malignant sickness affects the most sensitive parts of the human body, and since this sickness attempts to exit from the human body through parts having thinner layers of skin but to no avail, it finally lodges itself in areas suitable for the temptations of the evil spirits and their actions; hence, pouring the ablution water under the patient's garment means to extinguish such heat, and expel such virulent venom.

Another purpose of such ablution is to affect one's heart, which is the most sensitive, most impressionable, and the fastest in responding to crisis. The believer's heart will naturally respond and allay the effects of the venom, and quell the fire of envy. Thus, the victim is cured by God's leave. On the other hand, as in the example of a killer bee, once it stings its victim and its poison is released, its feels at peace, and also the victim feels satisfied when he kills it, and suddenly, he commences to regain his strength. His satisfaction helps him overcome the pain, and

thereafter, his body gathers its natural antidote to fight and expel the poison. Thus, washing under his garment helps the victim psychologically and prepares his heart to stand up to the malevolence of evil eye, while the surprise splashing of water over the victim's head helps extinguish the fire of the evil eye and annuls its malevolent effects.

Such fire will be simultaneously extinguished in both the victim as well as in the jealous person. On the other hand, the victim will rise in his spiritual station while the doer will fall. Such benefits are similar to those of the benefits of a blacksmith's water bucket which he uses to cool the hot piece of iron after heating it, and before setting its final shape. Such water is used in medicinal formulas used in natural *tibb* medicine.

Thus, comparing what herbalists (*tabã'i'ï*) dispense to their customers with the prescribed medicine of God's Messenger ﷺ, is like comparing a vendor of herbs to a fully trained physician, and even then, it does not measure up to the true essence and value of the prophetic medicine. It is also like comparing a physician's understanding to that of God's prophets and messengers. It is even out of the question! However, there is a subtle relationship between what they use to treat their patients, since the Creator and the Divine Legislator is one and the same, though each one is given knowledge according to his level of understanding.

Therefore, one can understand in this book the subtle and intimate relationship between wisdom, science, and the divine law, and that there is no contradiction between them whatsoever. Indeed Allah guides whoever He will onto whatever path He opens for him, and He will definitely open the door of success to someone who keeps knocking at His door. Hence success and victory are His gift, and are attainable only by His grace. Indeed His favors are plenty, and His proof is irrefutable.

1.7 Guarding One's Attainments

Among other preventive cures against the evil eye is to be discrete, free from ostentatiousness, and to maintain full reservation regarding what others may consider enviable. Imam al-Baghwi in his book *sharh al-Sunna* (Explaining The Prophetic Traditions), narrated that the Calif 'Uthmãn bin 'Affãn, God be pleased with him, once saw a beautiful looking child and asked his parents to tone down his looks in order to protect him from the evil eye. 'Aisha, God be pleased with her, narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ once delivered a sermon wearing an ornate looking black turban.

Al-Khattābi brought that narration to elucidate the meaning of the poet's verse:

Thy exalted perfection is unassailable
and does not need a suggestive flaw
to shield it from the evil eye

1.8 The Power of Prayers In Reversing The Effect of The Evil Eye

Abu 'Abdullāh al-Tayāhi narrated that he was once on his way to a pilgrimage to Mecca riding on a comely and swift running camel. In that caravan also travelled a man who became known to have a malevolent evil eye (*'ā'in*). He would rarely look at something that would not collapse. Half way through the journey, someone told Abu 'Abdullāh: "Guard your camel against the malevolent eye of this man!" Abu 'Abdullāh replied: "He can force no harm upon my camel." Someone went back to the other person and blabbered about what he heard Abu 'Abdullāh say. The pride and arrogance of the malevolent person awaited until Abu 'Abdullāh was busy away from his camel, and he stood before the camel and gazed at it. Immediately the camel became enraged and fell to the ground. When Abu 'Abdullāh returned, he was told that the malevolent person had charmed the camel. Abu 'Abdullāh demanded: "Lead me to him." As soon as he saw the man, Abu 'Abdullāh recited the following prayer: "I call upon the Sovereign Name of Allah, the power of which curbs aggression, Whose shelter is sacred, and Whose barrier is unbreakable, and which is a burning brand against mischief; and by its supremacy, I rescind and nullify the effects of the malevolent evil eye, and cast such effects back upon the aggressor and what he loves most. (He then quoted the holy Qur'an): ❮ Look carefully, do you see a single flaw therein? Yet, look once more, and your eyes will grow dim and weary ❯ (*Qur'an 67:3-4*).

بِسْمِ اللهِ، حَبْسٌ حَابِسٌ، وَحِجْرٌ يَابِسٌ، وَشِهَابٌ قَابِسٌ،
رَدَدْتُ عَيْنَ الْعَائِنِ عَلَيْهِ، وَعَلَى أَحَبِّ النَّاسِ إِلَيْهِ :
﴿ فَارْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ هَلْ تَرَى مِنْ فُطُورٍ، ثُمَّ ارْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ
كَرَّتَيْنِ يَنْقَلِبْ إِلَيْكَ الْبَصَرُ خَاسِئًا وَهُوَ حَسِيرٌ ﴾

Immediately the eyeball of the evildoer pupped out of their socket, and the camel stood back on her feet vindicated and unharmed.

1.9 Prophetic Guidance Regarding General Protective Prayers (*Ruqya*)

Abu Dãwoud reported in his *sunan* that Abi Dardã' heard God's Messenger ﷺ say: "If you complain of the evil eye, or should someone confront his brother about his evil eye, let the victim recite this prayer: 'Allah who is our Lord in heaven, Thy Name is blessed. Thy will controls the heavens and the earth. May Thy Mercy come upon us on earth as it is in the heavens. Forgive us the wrongdoing and sins we have done. Thou art the Lord of the good ones. Let Thy mercy descend upon us, and send a cure from Thee to relieve this pain,' and his sufferings shall be lifted by God's leave."

عن أبي داوُدْ في سُنَنه منْ حَديْث أبي الدَّرْداءَ قَالَ سَمعْتُ رَسُولَ الله يَقُولُ: "مَنْ إشْتَكَى منْكُمْ أو اشْتَكَاهُ أخٌ لهُ فَلْيَقُلْ رَبَّنَا اُ الَّذي في السَّمَاء تَقَدَّسَ اسْمُكَ أمْرُكَ في السَّمَاء والأرْض كَمَا رَحْمَتُكَ في السَّمَاءَ فَاجْعَلْ رَحْمَتَكَ في الأَرْضِ وَاغْفرْ لَنَا حَوبَنَا وَخَطَايَانَا أنْتَ رَبُّ الطَّيِّبيْنَ أنْزلْ رَحْمَةً مِنْ عِنْدِكَ وَشِفَاءً مِنْ شِفَائكَ عَلَى هَذَا الْوَجَعَ. فَيَبْرَأ بإِذْنِ اللهِ."

Also in the correct prophetic traditions of *sahih Muslim*, Abi Sa'id al-Khidri narrated that the blessed archangel Gabriel, upon whom peace, came to God's Messenger ﷺ and said: "O Muhammad, are you not feeling well?" He replied: "Indeed." Gabriel, upon whom peace, then recited: "In the Name of Allah I shelter you from any harmful illness, from the evil spirits, and from the evil eye of a jealous person. Indeed, Allah provides your cure, and by (the power of) His Name I raise you (beyond their reach)."

بِسْم الله أرْقيْكَ مِنْ كُلِّ دَاء يُؤْذيْكَ منْ شَرِّ كُلِّ نَفْسٍ
أوْعَيْنِ حَاسِدٍ. اللهُ يُشْفِيْكَ بِسْمِ اللهِ أرْقيْكَ

If someone argues concerning the prophetic saying cited earlier: "Amulets are only beneficial against the evil eye, fever, and venomous stings," we reply that God's Messenger ﷺ did not in this saying deny the permissibility of reciting special prayers in other than these three categories. The correct interpretation of the above prophetic saying in its Arabic mother tongue is that nothing alleviates the effects of the evil eye, fever, and venomous stings better than prayers (*ruqya*), also meaning amulet. This is well understood from the context of the narration when Sahil bin Hanïf who was

struck with an evil eye asked God's Messenger ﷺ: "O Messenger of God, are there any benefits in *ruqya* prayers?" God's Messenger ﷺ replied: "*Ruqya* is most beneficial against the evil eye, fever, and venomous stings." In fact, we have numerous special prophetic prayers (pl. *ruqã*) to recite for general purposes and specific ones. One also can read in *sahïh Muslim* that God's Messenger ﷺ permitted the recitation of *ruqã* against the evil eye, venomous bite, and eczema. Regarding reciting special prayers and wearing an amulet, it is reported that 'Awf bin Mãlik once questioned the practice by asking God's Messenger ﷺ: "Do you mean as we did during the days of paganism?" People than asked God's Messenger ﷺ: "O Messenger of God, how do you regard that?" He replied: "Recite unto me your verses." After hearing them, he commented: "All well and good, always provided there is no suggestion of polytheism in them."

Special prayers (*ruqã*) and the wearing of amulets are beneficial when accepted by the patient and received with his consent as a method for recovering from his illness. In fact, several prophetic traditions are ill interpreted today because of people implying an interpretation belonging to a different epoch and dialect than that of the prophetic sayings. This is despite the fact that the Islamic library of religious interpretations today is full of well documented references.

1.10 On Nullifying the Effects of a Poisonous Bite by Reciting the Opening Chapter of the Holy Qur'an

It is reported in the two collections of correct prophetic traditions (*sahïh Bukhãri and sahïh Muslim*), that Abu Sa'ïd Al-Khidri said: "A group of companions of God's Messenger ﷺ went on a journey. On their way, they came by a camp of Bedouins, and solicited their hospitality. The Arab Bedouins refused to welcome them, so the companions stayed nearby and took a rest. Meanwhile, the chief of the Bedouins became ill of a scorpion bite. His immediate circle tried everything they knew but to no avail. Finally, they went and asked the companions if they had anything to cure their chief. One of the companions replied: "Indeed, glory be to Allah, I know what effective prayers to recite as cure for a poisonous bite. However, we asked you to lodge us, and you refused to confer such hospitality, and I will not perform such prayers unless you make us an offer." The Arab Bedouins then cheered them and promised to reward them with a herd of sheep if they succeed in curing their chief.

Immediately, the companion went to the chief's tent and sprinkled him with his spittle while reciting the Opening Chapter (*Sūrat-ul Fātiḫa*) of the Qur'an which commences as follows: ‹ All praises be to God, the Creator and Sustainer of universes › (*Qur'an 1:1*). Suddenly, the chief recovered his energy, as though a tight headband was lifted. When the companion left him, the chief had regained all his strength. After the Arab Bedouins fulfilled their promise, the companions said: "Let's divide the reward." The one who performed the *ruqya* prayers replied: "Do nothing until we get back to God's Messenger ﷺ and relate our story." Later on, when they came before him and told him what happened, he commented: "How did you know that Al-Fātiḫa is a *ruqya*? Indeed, you were right. Now, divide what you have among you, and allow a share in it for me too."

Imam Ibn Māja reported a prophetic tradition related by 'Ali, God bless his countenance, that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "The best medicine is the Qur'an." In examining this saying, we agree on a well known fact that some words affect people differently. Some words are beneficial, and others harmful. If this is true regarding people's words, then what would one think of the holy Words of God Almighty Himself? The effectiveness of the divine words, in relationship to people's words, is as the holiness of Our Creator Himself versus His creation. For Almighty Allah is the supreme surety against any illness, whether it is of the heart or of the body; He is the absolute protection, the guiding light, and the all-encompassing mercy. Should His words descend on a mountain, it will crumble and be rent asunder before His Glory and Majesty. We saw that when God Almighty manifested His presence on *ṯūr Sīna* where Moses stood, the mountain shook in fear and reverence for its Lord.

1.11 The Essence of Sūrat-ul Fātiḫa, (Chapter One)

Almighty Allah says: ‹ We reveal of the Qur'an what is healing and mercy for the believers › (*Qur'an 17:82*). This is to specify the attribute, not to qualify the essence. This is like His saying: ‹ Allah promised forgiveness and a great reward to those who believe and do righteous deeds › (*Qur'an 48:29*). Those addressed in this verse were all believers, and all of them were known to be righteous. How can one fathom the glorious benefits of the Opening Chapter of the holy Qur'an, while neither the Torah of Moses, the Gospel of Jesus, the Psalms of David (upon all of whom

be peace), nor any other scripture ever approached its fullness of meanings. In fact, this particular chapter of seven verses contains the full essence of the entire Qur'an, and underlines the three essential divine attributes Allah, Rabb, and Rahmãn. All three clearly define the ultimate knowledge our Creator intended for His creation to understand. In it also is the reminder of the affixed appointment for the creation, the day they shall stand before their Creator to face His judgement. In it are also mentioned the two supreme attributes of His Oneness: (1) the Oneness of the Cherisher (*Rubũbiyya*); and (2) the Oneness of His Supreme Lordship and sovereignty (*Ulũhiyya*). In this Chapter is also described the creation's dependence on their Creator, and their asking for guidance and sustenance from Him, and further specifically recognizing the sole authority to be His in every matter.

Such is the best and ultimate prayer, the most healing to the hearts and bodies, and to which truth the entire creation is subjugated. Hence, what does the creation need most besides the divine guidance, and walking the straight path? To do what He commanded, to abstain from what He forbade, and to maintain resoluteness on His path till death comes. This Chapter also describes the three kinds of people: (1) one kind blessed to know their true Lord, to love Him, and to act upon such knowledge; and (2) the second kind of people who are accursed because of their wavering and heedlessness after knowing that God is true; and (3) the third group represents those who go astray even without being aware of how dangerous and damaging their actions are to their own souls in this world and in the hereafter. Those are the three types of creation. This Chapter also affirms fate, and predestiny, and the supremacy of the divine laws (*Sharī'a*). It also reveals the divine Names and attributes, the Day of Judgement, prophecies, the evaluation of souls, the correction and purification of hearts, and it speaks of Divine justice and Allah's recognition of the capabilities of His creation, what they can and cannot do. In fact, there are several voluminous studies and commentaries about the blessed Opening Chapter of the Holy Qur'an.

Hence, such blessed Divine words are most worthy of healing the sick, including: lifting adversities, and reversing the action of poison in the blood as a result of a snakebite, or a scorpion's bite, etcetera. Thus, the Opening Chapter represents the attitude of humility of the servant shows towards his Lord, celebrates His praises, entrusts all his needs to Him, depends on Him for his guidance, and beseeches Him to shower his soul with blessings,

which are divine guidance and light, and which invites benevolence, and avoids wrath. This is indeed the best of medicines for all illnesses.

Some commentators said that the central point of dissipating adversity in this Chapter is in the power and blessings of the words: ❮ Thee we worship, and Thy help we seek ❯ (*Qur'an 1:5*). For these two words: worship (*na'abudu*), and help (*n. 'oun; vt. nasta'īn*) are the strongest elements of the most effective cure for any illness. In them, one finds reliance, trust, shelter for recovery, recognizing one's need and dependence upon the sole Sustainer, acknowledging one's dependence on God Almighty, soliciting one's sustenance from the true Provider, and combining the asking for the ultimate goals, which are the worship of the One and Only Lord and Cherisher alone, and asking Him to grant good health to strengthen one's dedication, devotion, servanthood, and piety. Thus, the most noble of means for attaining such health and undiminishing wealth is to ask the sole Provider to help His subject perform his duties. This is why this is the best prayer for recovering from any illness, whether spiritual, mental, or physical.

I once fell ill during a stay in Mecca, and could not find a physician or the needed medicine, so I drank water from the well of Zamzam, read the verses of this Chapter over my cup a few times before drinking, and it led to my full recovery by God's leave.

1.12 The Benefits of Reciting Sūrat-ul Fātiha as a Charm (*ruqya*)

There are great benefits and subtle secrets in reciting the Opening Chapter of the holy Qur'an in the treatment of poisonous bites. Firstly, and as we have discussed in earlier sections in this chapter, poisonous reptiles and poisonous insects carry in them abominable inherent evil qualities, and their sole weapon to sustain such qualities is their poisonous bite and lethal sting. Moreover, such creatures can only squirt out their venom when they are seized with a fit of anger. On the other hand, God Almighty created a cure for every illness, an antidote for every venom, and for everything, He created its opposite.

As we have earlier discussed, the spirit of the evil eye effects a natural reaction in the spirit of its victim. In the same way, and upon their contact, the spirit of the exorcist (*rāqī*)[1] pierces through the spirit of the victim, and by instinct, both rise to rebut one

[1] Ruqya in Arabic also means 'to rise above something.'

another, just like the chemical reaction of the venom and its antidote when it enters the body to fight and nullify the effect of poison, just like the natural battle between the red cells and the white cells during an illness. The effectiveness of the cure depends on the potency of the antidote—assuming it is the correct medicine, and by God's leave, the prayers nullify the effect of the venom, and the body then carries on the task of expelling the residues.

Similar to that is the reaction between the spiritual sickness and the spiritual cure, and the same is the case of the physical illness and its reaction to the spiritual cure. In that sense, the exorcist's use of his breath and spittle upon the victim cools the latter's body and moisten the air, and when they are coupled with invocations and prayers coming from both the exorcist's heart and through his mouth, in this case, the effectiveness of prayers are intermingled with his breath and saliva, and they acquire greater potency. In fact, the chemical reaction in mixing prayers and saliva is similar to that of the preparation of compound drugs. Once they settle, their amalgamation produces opposite effects to those of the cause.

The spirit of the exorcist attacks the malevolent evil spirit with extreme vehemence, and regards the intrusion of the evil eye as abominable and unacceptable. The stronger is the spirit of the exorcist, his faith, purity, and prayers, the more effective is his charm. His use of his spittle against the evil eye is also to counter the scorpion's use of its sting, and the snake of its lethal bite.

Both good spirits and evil spirits use their spittle. This is why sorcerers in some forms of witchcraft tie knots and spit upon them while reciting imprecations. This is well indicated in the Qur'anic verse of seeking God's protection against the evil and witchcraft of those ‹ who spit over knots › (*Qur'an 113:4*) while reciting an imprecation. This is because when a spirit (*nafs*) meets with a possible fight, it embodies the state of rage, and becomes an angry fighter who blows his sibilance at his enemy, just like one who throws his lethal arrows at his opponent, and his spittle which is accompanied with some saliva intensifies the aggravation and effectiveness of the purpose. Witches sometimes use their spittle lacking the need to be in direct visual contact with their victim. This is done with the participation and assistance of the evil nether spirits. To counter that, the blessed and good spirits meet such intrusion by repellence through reciting Qur'anic verses, and by blowing such holy words against such evil spirits, and

follow such recital with spittle. The stronger combatant in such battle will win and dominate.

Battles of the spirits and their instruments are similar to those of the corporeal battles, their weapons and wars. The battlefield is the ground of their meeting their enemy, together with their weapons and soldiers. However, when one is imbued with his physical senses, he cannot recognize the presence of spirits, their influence, reactions, and intentions, because his corporeal senses are dominant, and he is far from recognizing the world of spirits, their laws, objectives, and endeavors.

In summary, if one's faith, soul, and spirit are strong, and if he adapts himself to the essence of the Opening Chapter (*Al-Fãtiha*), and by God's leave, by reciting its holy words and blowing them on the affected person followed by his spittle upon the victim, God willing, such reading will incur the reaction of the evil spirits and cause the elimination of their evil act—God knows best.

1.13 Treating Scorpion's Sting With Qur'anic Verses

Ibnu Abi Sheeba reported in his book of referenced traditions (*musnad*), that 'Abdullãh bin Mas'oud said: "We were standing in prayers behind God's Messenger ﷺ, and when we went into prostration, a scorpion smarted at him with its painful sting. God's Messenger ﷺ immediately took to the side and said: 'God cursed the scorpion, for it does not leave free from its harm neither a prophet nor anyone else.' God's Messenger ﷺ then asked for a pitcher of water and salt, and he applied the water with the salt to his wound and blew from his blessed breath at it while reciting: ❮ Say: Allah is the One and only God; Allah is the Eternal and Absolute; He does not beget nor is He begotten; and there is none like unto Him ❯ (*Qur'an 112:1-4*). ❮ Say: I seek the protection of the Creator and Sustainer of humankind, the Sovereign King of humankind, the only God of Humankind, from the insinuator of devilish thoughts, who withdraws and shrivels when God's Name is mentioned, and who spreads evil whispers in people's hearts, whether he comes from among the humans or jinn ❯ (*Qur'an 114:1-5*). ❮ Say: I seek refuge in the Lord of the dawn from the evil of His creation; from any evil that hides under the veil of darkness; from the evil of those who practice secret arts; and from the evil of an envious one when he exhibits envy ❯ (*Qur'an 113 1-6*). God's Messenger ﷺ repeated this treatment until the pain and poisonous effects subsided."

In this prophetic tradition, we recognize the application of the compound medicines: the natural and the spiritual. In Chapter 112 (*Sürat-ul Ikhlãs*), we also identify the most perfect constitution of scientific and doctrinal knowledge of God's Oneness. These verses also prove the belonging of the absolute sovereignty entirely to Allah, the sole Creator and Controller of the universes, and the holy verses refute any form of polytheism, or attributing partners or equals unto Him. They also emphasize that the entire creation, in their highest realms and the lowest ones, seek (*tasmud*) and find all their needs in His possession, and they all are dependent solely on His provision. The holy verses also cast off the erroneous human notion of begetting and the begotten (*lam yalid wa lam youlad*), which is a mere human misgiving regarding the concept of procreation, and require humans to desist from such allegations. The verses also refute the unfounded human idea of identifying the origin or extent of God Almighty, or of making comparisons, deductions, projecting resemblance, homogeneity, or making up equals unto Him. Such powerful revelations are a supreme guidance, and they pull away the believer from the avenues of confusion, darkness, heedlessness, and ultimate destruction. This is our Creator's own revelation about Himself, and the essential knowledge that makes this Chapter embrace the substance of one third of the entire Qur'an.

His divine attribute 'The Absolute' (*Al-Samad*), which is the unquestionable issue of His creation's seeking Him for all their needs and depending uniquely on His provision, proves His divinity and perfection. On the other hand, refuting the mere existence of equals unto Him proves His exaltedness, holiness, and that He is not subject to anthropomorphization, or the ascription of human characteristics by way of example.

His divine attribute 'The One' (*Ahad*), is a clear refutation of the false human concept of the existence of other creators besides Him, or associates, branches, or even helpers. The holy attribute Ahad, is also a celebration of His authorship, and His sole presence of Majesty and Glory.

These three divine attributes: (1) *Samad*; (2) *Ahad*; and (3) *Lam Yalid Wa Lam Youlad*, are the core of knowledge the creation must embrace, and they are the cardinal convention of confessing to His Oneness.

As for the two guardian Chapters 113 and 114 (*al-Mu'awwithatain*): they represent the shield of protection, and the creation's solicitation of the unassailable and impenetrable

refuge in Allah's holy Words from any and all evil, including evils that emerges in the darkness of the night (*ghãsiq*), and its cardinal sign, the moon, when its light is dim or opaque. Such evil and pernicious spirits hide during the daylight where they cannot surface, and take advantage of a dark night to emerge, cause havoc, and plunder through the psychic spheres of the sleepy ones, and the unjust ones, the weak ones, the heedless people, the negligent of their duty towards their Lord, and the oblivious and ignorant ones—hence, seeking refuge in the protective power of Allah's holy Words from the evil spells of sorcerers and witches who tie up knots on a cord, spit and blow on them with imprecations and maledictions. The divine shelter sought in this prayer also includes protection against the envious ones, their perniciousness, sinisterness, and evil eye.

The last Chapter of the holy Qur'an, 114 called *Nãss,* or Humankind, represents the needed prayer for the servant and dependent (*'abd*) upon the provisions of his Lord, who is seeking the Divine protection against any and all malediction, and to dispel the evil of human satans and jinn satans. In essence, both Chapters provide protection from such evil before they take place. They are the best shield and their power is unassailable. This is why God's Messenger ﷺ recommended to 'Uqba bin 'Ãmir to recite them regularly after every prayer, five times a day, and said: "No seeker of the Divine protection has ever received a better shield than these two prayers." (*Narrated by Imam al-Tirmithi*)

It is also reported in the correct prophetic traditions (*sahïh*) that prior to the revelation of these two Chapters, God's Messenger ﷺ fell ill by the evil sorcery of his enemies, who contrived their evil work by tying eleven knots on a cord and blowing upon them with special imprecations. These two Chapters were then revealed to him, and the archangel Gabriel, upon whom be peace, brought them down from his Lord. Every time he read them, one knot broke, until all of the eleven knots became untied, and suddenly, God's Messenger ﷺ stood up on his feet, as though a tightly held headband were taken off, and he became free from their evil act.

1.14 Benefits of Salt

As for the effects of the natural medicine and the use of rectified salt, it is used as an antidote for both hot and cold poison. It attracts the poison and then dissolves it, and is particularly effective against scorpion's poisonous sting. Avicenna advises to make a paste of salt and linseed, and apply it as a poultice. Other traditional

physicians (*hakïms*) also mention salt and describe its property of attracting the poison and dissolving it, and its usefulness as a cathartic, to excite vomiting, to stimulate the appetite, or as a restorative. Immoderate use of salt provokes itch, while moderate use of it beautifies the color of the skin. Salt is also used to soften the bath water, and as a preservative and a stabilizer.

Since the scorpion's sting causes a burning sensation that requires cooling, attraction, and dissolving, applying salt, or saltwater to the wound provides an easy way for such treatment.

Imam Muslim reported in his collection of correct prophetic traditions (*sahïh Muslim*), of Abu Huraira narrating that a man came to God's Messenger ﷺ and said: "O Messenger of God, I was bit by a scorpion last night!" God's Messenger ﷺ replied: "If only you prayed before you went to bed: 'I seek refuge in Allah's perfect Words from any evil that vents from His creation,' no harm could have affected you!"

One also should realize that spiritual medicines are effective both before and after an affliction takes place. Regularly subscribing to one's prayers may prevent its happening, and even if it takes place, its harm will be cursory by God's leave, while exercising it only after affliction takes place nullifies the harm and dispels its effects. On the other hand, using natural medicines may be effective after affliction takes place. Thus, regularly reciting one's prayers for protection (*ta'weetha*) can either prevent the cause, or lessen its effects. The degree of effectiveness of such prayers also depends on reciting the correct *ta'weetha*, its strength, or its weakness.

Hence, reciting special healing prayers (*ruqã*), or carrying an amulet, or invoking a *ta'weetha*, is used to preserve one's health, or to overcome an illness. As for the first purpose of reciting *ta'weetha*, it is reported by 'Aisha, God be pleased with her, that God's Messenger ﷺ used to recite *Sürat-ul Ikhlãs*, and the *Mu'awwithatain*, then blow into the palm of his hands and wipe his face, and whatever parts of his body his hands could reach.[1] In another prophetic saying narrated by 'Aowtha Abi Dardã', it is reported that God's Messenger ﷺ also used to pray before retiring to sleep: "O Allah, You are indeed my Lord. There is no god other than You. In You I trust, and You are the Lord of the Magnificent Throne." We have earlier explained this prophetic prayer, and whoever recites it in the morning—no harm will touch him until the evening; and whoever recites it in the evening—no harm shall touch him until the morning.

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[1] Reported in Bukhãri and Muslim

It is also narrated in the two collections of correct prophetic traditions (*sahīh Bukhāri and sahīh Muslim*), that whosoever recites the last two verses of *Sūrat-ul Baqara* in the evening, will have ample protection. These two verses translate as follows:

In the Name of Allah, the Merciful and Compassionate ❮ The Apostle believes in what is revealed to him from his Lord, as do the men of faith. Each one of them believes in Allah, His angels, His books, and His messengers. (They proclaim): "We make no differences between one and another of His messengers." And they say: "Our Lord, we hear and obey. Forgive us, our Lord, and to Thee is the final bound."

Allah does not demand from a soul more than it can deliver. (Every soul) receives the reward it earns, and suffers the consequences of its ill-doing.

"Our Lord, do not condemn us if we forget or fall into error. Our Lord, do not subject us to hardship (as a result of our sins), as Thou subjected those before us. Our Lord, do not lay on us a burden greater than we have strength to bear. Pardon us, forgive us our sins, and have mercy on us. Thou art our protector, so help us against the incredulous clans ❯ (*Qur'an 2:285-286*).

Also narrated in *sahīh Muslim* is that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "When one arrives at a place and immediately recites: 'I seek the protection of God's perfect Words from any evil that may spur from His creation—nothing shall harm him during his stay."

It is also related in *Sunan Abi Dāwoud* that God's Messenger ﷺ used to pray at nightfall during a journey: "Hear me O Earth! My Lord and your Lord is Allah. I seek refuge in Him from your evil; from any evil you bear inside you; and any evil that walks upon you. I seek God's protection from a lion, or any wilder creature; from a serpent, or a scorpion; from any of the evil dwellers of this place, and I seek God's protection from any creature and what it bears."

As for the second type of *ruqya*, we have already explained it in the previous sections.

1.15 Treating Eczema With Ruqā Prayers

We cited in an earlier section the narration of Anas, God be pleased with him, who reported in *sahīh Muslim* that God's Messenger ﷺ sanctioned the recitation of *ruqā* prayers to ward off the evil eye, venomous bite, and eczema. On this subject too, it is related in the collection of *sunan* Abi Dāwoud that God's Messenger ﷺ

once came to Hafsa and found al-Shafã', daughter of 'Abdullãh, teaching her how to write. He commented: "As you teach her how to write, why don't you teach her the special *ruqya* prayer for eczema?"

Eczema (Arb. *namla*), is a skin disorder which is characterized by inflamed, itchy skin eruption that often contains small bubbles beneath the skin, and the formation of scales. 'Dermatitis', which is caused by an external irritant, is an often interchangeable term with such inflammation of the skin known as eczema, and in severe cases produces a weeping, itchy rash. The Arabic term for it is *namla*, i.e., formication or eczematization, which is an itchy sensation similar to that of an irritating acid caused by ants' bite, or spiders' bite. Such insects inject their victims with a colorless acid which is also found in nettles among other plants. There are three kinds of eczema: (1) erythrodermic eczema; (2) eczema seborrhoeicum; and (3) weeping eczema. There are also several types of skin eruptions that resemble eczema and are known as eczematoid.

It is reported that al-Shafã', daughter of 'Abdullãh, also used to recite *ruqã* prayers during the pagan period (*jãhiliyya*) before Islam. She had embraced Islam in Mecca and made her covenant with God's Messenger ﷺ therein before he migrated to Medina. Referring back to the abovementioned prophetic tradition, it is related that al-Shafã' then said: "O Messenger of God, I used to recite *ruqã* prayers before Islam, should I recite them before you?" She then recited: "In the Name of Allah, this eruption must drain from the pores of the skin, and cause no further harm. O Supreme Lord, relieve this adversity, O Cherisher and Sustainer of humankind."

Al-Shafã', daughter of 'Abdullãh, used to recite this prayer seven times over aloe, or peony plant (*paeonia*), crush its leaves and flowers, mix them with stale vinegar on a clean stone, and massage it over the irritated area. Usually, this treatment was effective then.

1.16 Using Ruqã Prayers For Snakebite

It is reported in the collection of prophetic traditions of *sunan* Ibn Mãja, that Ibn Shahãb al-Zahri said: "One of the companions of God's Messenger ﷺ was bit by a poisonous snake. (To emphasize the validity of *ruqya* prayers), God's Messenger ﷺ asked: 'Is there anyone here who knows a particular *ruqya* for this?' The companions

replied: 'The family of Hazam used to recite special *ruqã* (pl.) prayers to nullify the effects of a venomous snakebite, but since you forbade doing so, they ceased that practice.' God's Messenger ﷺ then said: 'Call 'Ammãra bin Hazam.' When he arrived, he was asked to relate his special *ruqya* prayer, and when he did, God's Messenger ﷺ said: 'There is nothing wrong with it,' and he gave him permission to recite it, and the victim of the snakebite recovered thereafter."

1.17 TREATING SUPPURATIONS, BOILS, OR CUTS WITH RUQYA

'Aisha, God be pleased with her, narrated that when someone complained to God's Messenger ﷺ of suppurations (*pyosis*), a boil, or a wound, God's Messenger ﷺ used to lick the tip of his index finger and touch the dirt (*turãb*) with it and pray: "In the Name of Allah Who created the dirt of our earth, and made the saliva of some of us an elixir for our sick— by His leave, our Lord." God's Messenger ﷺ then would touch the affected area with whatever dust his index finger collected while reciting the same prayer. (*Reported in sahĭh Muslim and Bukhãri*)

بِسْمِ اللهِ تُرْبَةُ أَرْضِنَا بِرِيقِ بَعْضِنَا لِيَشْفَى
سَقِيمُنَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّنَا

The above prayer is easy and beneficial, and is considered as a compound treatment that is accessible to every one. It is a gentle therapy, and indicate subtle and deep knowledge. With it, one can treat his brother's infected wound, cut, boil, fester, or suppuration, particularly when access to other medications is not available. On the other hand, earth is the source and mother of every medicine. Pure and clean soil is cold and dry, and by lightly applying its dust to the infected skin, it will help the drying up of moisture and pus that is formed underneath the skin.

Commonly, some people feel discomfort or upset after receiving a simple wound, or when such wound festers and is followed by suppurations. Their feeling of discomfort also represents a humoral imbalance of hot temperament. The combination of the heat of the natural climate, the hot temperament, and the heat of the wound itself or its suppurations are countered by the cold and dry earth which is colder than many simple cold medicines, and particularly when the dirt is cleansed and dried for this purpose.

Such infections are sometimes followed by putrid moistures and gleet (*pyorrhea*), and the dry and cold earth, or purified clay,

assists in gradual and progressive evaporation of such moistures that would otherwise hamper convalescence. This process helps balancing the humors in the infected area, consequently eliminating the cause and associated pain by God's leave.

As explained in the above prophetic tradition, God's Messenger ﷺ then would lick the tip of his index finger and touch the dirt, then lightly place his finger on the affected area with whatever dust his finger collected while reciting the above prayer. The blessings of such prayer include the invocation of Allah's holy Name, trusting all matters to Him, and relying on His benevolence to bestow recovery. Thus, the natural and the spiritual cores are combined, and the effectiveness of the intention becomes stronger. As for God's Messenger's choice of the word 'our earth', this could mean both the mother earth, as well as particularly the blessed soil of the city of Medina. Scholars' opinions vary in this case, however, it is a common knowledge today that applying purified clay to the skin is most useful for a variety of illnesses and skin diseases. Galen expressed in his writings that he saw in Alexandria, Egypt, people who suffered from splenalgia, enlargement of the spleen (*splenomegaly*), and from dropsy, and who applied Egyptian clay by overlaying a coat of such natural clay to their thighs, arms, backs, or ribs, and who seemed to benefit from such therapy, also known as pelotherapy, or pelopathy.

Therefore, coating the skin with such natural clay provides a powerful drying action, acts as a potent absorbent, and may help in a variety of septic abscesses, septicopyemic blood diseases, skin flaccidity, and other skin abnormalities. In some well-documented cases, sufferers of substantial body obesity resulting from abnormal abdominal or vaginal blood discharge, as well as from extensive blood purgation through cupping from their legs and thighs, and sufferers of tortuous chronic diseases effecting various parts of the body recovered completely, and benefited greatly from applying this natural clay.

Natural clay is rich in minerals and hydrous aluminum silicate that readily absorb water. Such clay is produced by the chemical decomposition of rocks. Terra sigillata, for instance, is styptic for hemorrhaging. The absorbing and sealing potency of such clay also helps the pellucidness of the cells, the contraction of tissues, and in the formation of new cells that seal ulcerations.

If such are the properties of natural clay from common soils, then what would one think of the most blessed of soils on earth, that is the soil of the Medina City of Lights, particularly when

mixed with the most blessed saliva, or unguent, of God's Messenger, upon whom be peace, and when such act is accompanied by a true invocation of the most exalted attributes of his Lord? And as we have earlier explained, the effectiveness of *ruqya* prayers depends greatly on the state and faith of the invoker, and what reaction the sick person shows towards it, and his faith in its effectiveness. Such aspects cannot be refuted by any wise physician. If one who is invoking such *ruqya* prayers finds himself lacking a true state of attainment, or feels inadequacy in himself to produce such effects, then let him pray whatever his heart can muster, and he should conclude his invocation by saying: *"Mã shã-Allah"* (God's Will be done).

مَا شَاءَ اللهُ

1.18 Treating Pain And General Malaise With Ruqya

It is narrated in *sahīh Muslim* that 'Uthmãn bin Abi'l-'Ãs once complained to God's Messenger ﷺ about some chronic pain he suffered since the early days of his Islam. God's Messenger ﷺ then said: "Put your (right) hand on the area of the body that hurts, and pray: '*Bismillãh*' (In the Name of Allah, the Sovereign Lord) three times; then repeat seven times: '*A'outhu bi-'Izzatillãhi wa Qudratihi min sharri mã ajidu wa mã uhãthir*' (I seek refuge in the might of Allah and His supreme dominion over everything against what I am experiencing, and the fatigue that is wearing me out).

One will find in this formula the invocation of God's supreme Name; trusting one's fate to the hand of the True Healer; relying on His mercy and compassion; and seeking refuge in His sovereignty and power against the handicap and sufferings pain can cause. Repeating this prayer is more salubrious and ensuring, and is like renewing a prescription to expel an illness. As for repeating the invocation seven times: there is no doubt that the number seven evokes particular benefits one does not find in other numbers, as we discussed in an earlier chapter.

It is also related in the two collections of correct prophetic traditions that when God's Messenger ﷺ visited a sick person in his family, he used to anoint him by passing his blessed hand over the sick person's head and praying: "O Lord and Cherisher of human beings, relieve these sufferings and cure this servant. Indeed, Thou alone has the power of healing, and Thou alone can effect permanent recovery."

اللّهُمَّ رَبَّ النّاسِ أَذْهِبِ الْبَأْسَ وَاشْفِ لاَ شِفَاءَ إِلاَّ شِفَاؤُكَ شِفَاءً لاَ يُغَادِرُ سَقَمًا

This *ruqya* prayer implores Allah's utmost perfection, the sovereignty of the sole sustaining attributes (*rubübiyya*), and His mercy that encompasses everything to endow such blessings of recovery, and that He alone has such powers and no one else can effect recovery from an illness. Thus, this prayer embodies the glorification of His Oneness (*Tawheed*), cognizance (*ihsān*) of His knowledge of everything, and the acknowledgment of His absolute Lordship (*rubübiyya*).

1.19 Overcoming The Fever of Adversity and Sorrow

God Almighty says: ❮ Give glad tidings to those who exercise patience when struck with adversity and say: 'Indeed we belong to Allah, and to Him is our return.' Such ones receive the blessings and Mercy of their Lord, and such are the guided ones ❯ (*Qur'an 2:155*).

We also find a related reference to the above Qur'anic verse in the *masnad* of Imam Ahmad, that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Whoever is struck with a calamity and says: 'Indeed we belong to Allah, and to Him is our return. Lord, be Thou my helper in this trial, and replace my loss with what is better.' Allah will surely help him and replace his losses with what is better."

إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ اللّهُمَّ أَجِرْنِي مِنْ مُصِيبَتِي وَاخْلُفْ لِي خَيْرًا مِنْهَا

Such words of wisdom represent the ultimate cure for one's sufferings. They demonstrate one's knowledge of his Lord, and they are most beneficial to one's well-being in this world and in the hereafter. These words also embody two sublime elements, and when a servant realizes them, they will certainly engage his focus and make his calamity seem insignificant. Firstly, the above prayer means that the servant, his family, and his property truly belong to Allah. Whatever endowments He advanced to accommodate the temporary needs of His servant during his lifetime in this world, He has the full right to keep them or suspend them. When God Almighty takes them back, they are like a loaned object; the lender has full right to recover upon the conclusion of terms. The existence of a servant in this world is also besieged by two vacuities, one before his birth to this world, and the second after

his departure from it. In this sense, the Owner has full right to terminate the use of any favor He made available on a temporary basis and under specific conditions, or to deprive His subject of further using them. Moreover, it proves that such ancillary components are not indicative of absolute dependability, and that the True Owner controls the terms of their usage. Hence, how can an ephemeral existence espouse permanent ownership? Such borrowed elements have no power to truly sustain or protect one from adversity, or to defend him after he leaves this world. In this sense, God Almighty is the sole owner of everything, and no one has actual ownership of anything but Him, and one's usage of such elements does in no way permit him to dispose of them as he pleases. Instead, such transient usage is subject to the terms and conditions of the Owner.

The second aspect of the above prayer deals with the indubitable destination of the servant, and his eventual and necessary return to his Lord. The Wisdom of the Creator made such return incumbent upon all creation, and that they should all taste death, depart from the world, and come before the true Sovereign Lord, and stand naked as the day they were created. Neither family nor clan will on that day be there to defend him; instead, each person's own good and bad deeds shall be justly weighed. When such rudimentary condition is understood, then how can any one own anything, rejoice about owning anything, or be sorrowful for losing anything? In such view, one must keep his focus on his final destination, having recognized the wayfarer's rules of survival.

One's recognition of his fate (*qadar*) also confirms that what will befall him and what will miss him are inevitable. GodAlmighty confirms this aspect in the holy Qur'an, saying: ❮ Whatever befalls the earth or yourselves is inscribed in a record before its taking place. Surely this is easy for Allah. In order that you do not feel despair over what you lose, nor exult over favors He bestowed upon you. Surely Allah does not like any vainglorious boaster❯ (*Qur'an 57:22*).

As a remedy for such illness, one should stop for a moment and reflect upon his so-called 'misfortune' and surrounding circumstances, and he will certainly find that parallel to his losses, his Lord (*Rabb*), in His infinite mercy and unfathomable grace, has kept him an endowment of equal value or even better one. On the other hand, through such adversity, God Almighty has given him an opportunity to ponder the Divine miracle, and recognize the mystery of Divine control (*Quyyoumiyya*) over the entire universes. Furthermore, by exercising patience over one's adversity,

one will discover that God Almighty has reserved for him a greater reward, and should it be God's Will, He certainly has the power to make that an infinite one. Through contemplation, one will also recognize that God Almighty has the power to inflict greater calamities, and that because of His compassion upon His creation, He has judiciously delimited the impact of what His servant perceives as misfortune.

2.1 Extinguishing The Fire of Bewilderment

To extinguish the fire of one's feeling bewildered or depressed as a result of his misfortune, he should look around him, and recognize that his calamity could have been greater. He also should observe others who may be suffering greater adversities in the process of learning their own lessons, and by looking closer, he will realize that the glitters of the 'ideal family' who may appear to have good fortune, also may conceal deep sorrow and discontent.

Hence, if one looks to his right side, will he see other than trials and adversities? And if he looks to his left side, will he see other than sorrow and discontent? In fact, should one search around the entire world, he will find that not one soul is free from any kind of trial. It is either the loss of a beloved, or complaining about a routine daily headache at work. One will also realize that true happiness in this world is a dream that may take place in one's sleep, or like a shadow that will undoubtedly disappear as soon as the sun sets, and that whatever causes exultation will ultimately bring about much sorrow and grief. He will also realize that what may make one happy for one day in this world, may cause his sorrow for a decade thereafter; that one's temporary pleasure will surely be followed by an extended period of privation; that a house full of provisions and supplies is also full of dust; that whenever the world offers someone a day of peace and joy, it certainly has an inauspicious one reserved for him.

Ibn Mas'oud, God be pleased with him, once said: "Surfeit of joy will surely be followed with plenty of sorrow; and a happy family will one day be struck with extreme grief when it mourns its dead." Imam Ibn Seerīn once said: "Whenever there is laughter, it will surely be followed with crying." Hind, daughter ofAl-Nu'mãn, once said: "I saw my family one morning as the strongest and the wealthiest, and by sunset, we became the least, and most divested of people. Surely, whenever God Almighty fills a house with abundance, He also shrouds it with dust." Someone asked her to relate her story, and Hind replied: "Our family saw a day where there was not one Arab who did not beseech us to fulfill

his needs, and later on, we couldn't find one Arab to show mercy upon us."

Her sister, H̲arqa, daughter of Al-Nu'mān, was found once crying during the apogee of al-Nu'mān dynasty. Someone asked her: "What is making you cry, did any one hurt you?" She replied: "Nay! I have just witnessed the blossoming of my family, and recognized that rarely does happiness fill a house without being supervened with sorrow." Ish̲āq bin Talh̲a once visited H̲arqa and asked her: "How do you feel about the passageway of transition to kingdomship?" She replied: "What we are experiencing today is surely better than that of yesterday. However, we find in the books (of history) that no human has ever experienced one day of jubilation without sustaining a consequent downturn, and that life has never shown any one a day of glamor and appeal without later on showing him its teeth." She then said:

One day we governed people's interests,
And the final decision was ours.
We suddenly became in need of their charity,
Hoping that they will be ethical and just unto us!
Woe unto a world whose comforts do not last,
Who wheels its people upward and further brings them down,
And falsely appears as if it were
the controller of their destiny!

2.2 Other Treatments for Anxiety And Sorrow

One must also know that anxiety, sorrow, depression, and bewilderment do not heal one's pain or help recover his losses; instead, besides aggravating it, they are part of the disease itself. The real cure lies in exercising patience and surrendering all responsibilities to God Almighty. That is to beseech Him and to draw on His grace, mercy and guidance. Allah has promised to confer such blessings upon the believers who exercise patience (*s̲abr*). A relapse in this case is more damaging than the initial shock. Anxiety, depression, and sorrow engender the malicious joy of one's enemy, cause grief to one's friends, delight his own Satan, down grade one's reward, limit his attainments, and weaken his spirit. By contrast, when one is successful at exercising patience and pondering the event, and the divine will behind everything, he will be able to banish his Satan, cast off his insinuations and discontent, and impair his purpose. Meanwhile, one will have pleased his Lord, comforted those who care for him, appeased the hearts of his friends, and upset his enemy. By facing up to adversity and enduring it with courage and patience, one will

be able to comfort his friends before they come to console him. This is true endurance and the highest form of perfection — not depression, despair, despondency, bursting into loud lamentation, resenting one's fate, or abortively challenging the outcome.

Another remedy for anxiety, sorrow, depression, and bewilderment is to know that exercising patience and pondering the wisdom behind the event (*ihtisāb*) is a blessing that will bear the everlasting fruit of ultimate satisfaction, delight, and pleasure, compared with the ephemeral and limited perspective of emotional thrill associated with meeting no adversity, incurring no losses, or gradually cutting one's attachments in this world. In this case, it is most rewarding for a believer to know that when he exercises patience and expresses gratitude (*al-Hamd*) to his Lord for whatever befalls him, God Almighty will reward him with the abode of the grateful ones, known as *Bait-ul Hamd*, which is reserved for the true servants and dwellers of paradise. In this sense, one should value the prize, and consider which is the greater calamity and loss: the ephemeral or the eternal? Would he rather give-up what he has no power to keep, or lose what he cannot win otherwise? Surely, losing the house of gratitude in paradise is a greater loss.

Imam al-Tirmithi reported that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "On the Day of Reckoning, people would wish to have had their skin gnawed with clippers in the world, one morsel at a time, in view of the great blessings and exaltation reserved for those who bore their afflictions with patient and gratitude in the world." In this regard, one of our predecessors said: "Had it not been for our trials and tribulations in this world, we would enter paradise as paupers."

Another cure for this illness is to comfort one's heart with hope and anticipation that God Almighty will surely replace the believer's losses with what is better. In fact, every loss in this world is replaceable except losing one's connection with Almighty Allah. Another remedy consists of the believer's assured knowledge that his stake of the calamity could not have been avoided. Hence, if he is content, then the virtues of contentment are his prize, and if he is upset, then the rowels of discontent are the ruinous jaws of his lot.

In this regard, one is given a choice between good luck or bad luck. If one's calamity infuriates him, causes him rage, discontent and ingratitude (*kufur*), his name shall be inscribed in the record of the companions of loss and destruction. If his calamity produces anxiety, depression and neglect of his underlying obligations, both

spiritual and religious, or if it causes him to step into forbidden boundaries, his name shall be inscribed in the record of the negligent and disregardful ones. If his calamity impels him to complain and be impatient, his name shall be inscribed in the record of the baleful and deceived ones. If one's calamity raises his objection to God's will, he would have knocked on the door of atheism or embarked on the avenues of apostasy. On the other hand, if one's faith leads him to face his calamity with patience, and if it produces contentment with God's will, his name shall be inscribed in the record of the blessed and contented if it impels him to be more grateful to his Lord, his name shall be inscribed in the record of the grateful. If one's calamity increases his love and yearning to meet his Lord, his name shall be inscribed in the record of the sincere ones who truly love their Lord.

On this subject, we find in the collection of correct prophetic references (*masnad*) of Imam Ahmad, and that of Imam al-Tirmithi, in a narration by Mahmoud bin Lubaid, that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "When Allȧh loves some people, He subjects them to trials. The lucky ones are content and pleased with their Lord, and the unlucky ones are resentful and bitter."

The secret and nature of love lie in one's unconditional agreement and harmony with his beloved. Hence, if one finds in himself objection, resentment, or bitterness towards whom he claims to love, he surely has no love for him. He somehow loves to displease him, and represents himself as deserving censure, and he becomes prime witness to his own falsehood, hypocrisy, and lies. On this subject, Abi Dardã', God bless his soul, said: "When Allah decrees something, He loves His creation to consent to it." During his illness, 'Imrãn bin H̲as̲ïn used to say: "What I love most, is what He loves most." Speaking of adversities, Abu'l-'Ãliya used to say: "Trials are a remedy and a cure that works only for a true lover, and no one else is permitted to benefit from it."

As we explained earlier, to overcome the condition of anxiety and bewilderment, one must weigh the value of the two delights and pleasures—the ephemeral and the eternal — and he must consider which one of the two is more lasting, the immediate relief or the permanent cure. Hence, contentment and gratitude for one's adversity becomes a transient pleasure that leads towards enjoying Allah's everlasting reward (*t̲h̲awãb*), which is reserved for the truly grateful ones. When such choice is given, it represents an opportunity to establish the predominance of one satisfaction over the other. Should one incline towards the more preponderant offer, he should be very grateful to Allah for guiding him. Otherwise,

if he inclines towards the lesser condition, he must understand that the calamity he suffers from his mind, heart, religious inversion, and ungodliness is much greater than his worldly sickness and adversities.

Furthermore, one must know that He Who commands and controls the mutation of all transitory and permanent conditions, is the Wise and Just Lord, and He is the Most Merciful and Compassionate One, and that He does not decree such developments in one's life in this world to destroy him, to hurt him, or to annihilate him. Instead, through His all-encompassing mercy, He has visited him with such trials to either further his growth, or to allow him to understand his real and naked condition. Such trials will help the servant to recognize his true state of faith, contentment, gratitude, forbearance, and patience with his Lord. During such trials, Allah, the Magnificent, would also want to hear His servant calling upon Him, beseeching Him, running back to Him, abiding by the threshold of His door, seeking His blessings and acceptance, asking for His forgiveness for his sins, his failing to give proper attention to his covenant, his losing his focus, or for being distracted from his real and permanent benefits by the glitters of this world. Should the believer understand the seriousness of his condition, he will surely become brokenhearted, and his devastation must awake him from heedlessness and slumber, and he must raise his hands to the heavens, cry for forgiveness, and dispel the shadows of discontent, resentment, objection, bitterness, or disloyalty towards his Lord.

Shaikh Muhyiddeen Abdul-Qãdir Gilãni, God bless his soul, once said: "Child, trials do not come to destroy you, they come to test your forbearance and faith. Child, fate is a lion, and a lion does not eat a cadaver." Thus, adversities are the bellows of the servant, and this world is the foundry where one's qualities can be melted with its heat to mould his final cast. The final outcome may either be gold or dross. As a poet once said:

We melted it thinking it is silver,
to find out that it is only molten iron dross

Therefore, if one does not consent and accept the benefits of the bellows of this world, then let him await the awesome bellows of hell-fire in the hereafter. The servant must also understand that in order to develop and yield a final cast, it is imperative that he be subjected to one of the two bellows: (1) trials of the world, or (2) trials of hell-fire. If he understands that, then he should be grateful and know that indeed Allah has favored him

and blessed him to endure the temporary trials of this world instead of the lasting ones in the hereafter. One also must know that had the servant been immune to such trials and tribulations, he would be struck with the fatal illnesses of pride, arrogance, rebellion, Pharaonism, and rock-heartedness, and such qualities will ultimately and surely cause him to perish in this world, and to experience the perpetual and ever-harrowing destruction in the hereafter.

Such is divine compassion when He visits His servant with necessary remedies that externalize as trials in this world. This is in fact the preventive medicine that eliminates the possibility of any malignant growth or fatal illnesses. Such remedy is created to protect one's faith and devotion, to expel through purgation the nauseating effects of a corrupt mind and spirit, and to bring forth the original intended purity. A poet once said:

Sometimes Allah blesses a servant with adversities,
even hard ones to bear,
and at other times, opulence is the greatest of all adversities.

Thus, each servant receives the needed and necessary quantity of medicine to help the purgation and flushing of accumulated lethal substances in his mind, heart and spirit, and to cleanse his system. This is a gesture of mercy and love which the All-Compassionate Allah gives His servant as a measured dose that will interact with his illness, and which has the potential to overcome deadly diseases. These are the diseases of the mind, heart, and spirit. According to common initial human perception, they are called trials and adversities. However, in truth, such medicine is the ultimate trial of one's real illnesses, and the preventive remedy for potential ones. In this process, Allah cleanses and purifies His servant for the most honorable of stations in this world, and that is to worship Him, and later on, the best and most rewarding of stations in the hereafter, and that is to see Him, and to reside nigh unto Him.

The cure is also found in one's realization and understanding that the bitter taste of this world is what brings about the sweet taste of the hereafter, and that only Almighty Allah has the power to effect such transformation of substance. One also must realize that the sweet taste of this world projects a bitter end in the hereafter. Hence, the interim passage from bitterness to sweetness is better than its antithesis. If one cannot clearly fathom what this means, then he should contemplate the blessed saying of God's Messenger ﷺ: "Paradise is bordered with trials and difficulties, and hell-fire is bordered with excitements and appeal."

People's minds cannot equally capture the full essence and meaning of this prophetic saying, which also proves that people have diverse levels of understanding. During such trials, people's real essence comes to the surface, for the majority of human beings prefer the ephemeral pleasure over the everlasting one. In fact, most people do not like to endure even one hour of asperity and strain to win everlasting pleasure and comfort—they do not like to sustain one hour of indignation to win permanent eminence, and if possible, they would rather not suffer one hour of discomfort to gain permanent wholesomeness. In their minds, now is proven and later is unknown. Their faith is weak, and their desire and lust reign over them. Their deep-rooted illness begets them nothing but hastiness and giving preference to the lethal and temporary pleasures of this world, and their denial of the existence of the hereafter and what shall unfailingly come.

This is the state of those who can only recognize and accept the tangible, the touchable, and the elementary, and who will only testify to what their physical eyes can see. However, as far as gazing and penetrating the depth of the barriers that hedge this ephemeral world is concerned, or reaching beyond its frontiers to understand the divine purpose and to recognize the consequences of every action, this state is reserved for humans of much higher state of consciousness. Such are the true teachers to seek and examples to follow. They are the beloved of Allah, His obedient servants, His deputies (*awliya*), and His protégés. For them, Allah has prepared the utmost and everlasting satisfaction, the eternal joy, and granted them the ultimate victory. By contrast, what He has prepared for the heedless and the procrastinators is surely nothing but disgrace, sufferings, and eternal sorrow.

Hence, choose which of the two states suits you best. However, most likely people will only exude what they embody, grow their own kind of feathers, and lean toward their own weaknesses, and that is most natural. Furthermore, should you consent to this treatment, then bear with it, and do not regard it as lengthy, for in fact the intense need for it made the physician as well the patient call for it, and for God Almighty to provide it—Indeed He is the best of guardians.

2.3 Treatment of Distress, Worries, Grief, and Dispiritedness

Ibn Abbās, God be pleased with him, narrated that during adversities, God's Messenger ﷺ used to pray: "There is no god

other than Allah, the he should pray: 'Lord, I am Thy servant, whose father and mother are Thy servants; my fate is in Thy Hand; my destiny is moving according to Thy plan. Thou art indeed jut in Thy judgement. I call upon Thy Holy Names, and every Holy Attributes Thou proclaimed in Thy Kingdom, or revealed in Thy Book, or taught to any privileged servant, or kept as Thy sole secret. Lord, make the glorious Qur'an the prime of my heart, the light of my soul, and the manifest grace that dispels my sorrow and concerns.' Whoever prays thus, Allah will abolish his worries, dispel his distress, (and replace them with joy)." (*Reported in the Masnad of Imam Ahmad*)

اَللّٰهُمَّ إِنِّي عَبْدُكَ ابْنُ عَبْدِكَ ابْنُ أَمَتِكَ نَاصِيَتِي بِيَدِكَ
مَاضٍ فِيَّ حُكْمُكَ عَدْلٌ فِيَّ قَضَاؤُكَ أَسْأَلُكَ بِكُلِّ إِسْمٍ
هُوَ لَكَ سَمَّيْتَ بِهِ نَفْسَكَ أَوْ أَنْزَلْتَهُ فِي كِتَابِكَ أَوْ عَلَّمْتَهُ
أَحَداً مِنْ خَلْقِكَ أَوِ اسْتَأْثَرْتَ بِهِ فِي عِلْمِ الْغَيْبِ عِنْدَكَ
أَنْ تَجْعَلَ الْقُرْآنَ الْكَرِيْمَ رَبِيْعَ قَلْبِي وَنُوْرَ صَدْرِي وَجَلاَءَ
حُزْنِي وَذَهَابَ هَمِّي

Ibn Abbãs, God be pleased with him, narrated that during adversities, God's Messenger ﷺ used to pray: "There is no god other than Allah, the Magnificent, the Forbearing. There is no god other than Allah, the Sustainer of the Glorious Throne. There is no god other than Allah, the Sustainer of the seven firmaments, the earth, and the bounteous Sustainer of the Divine Throne."

لاَ إِلَهَ إِلاَّ اللّٰهُ الْعَظِيْمُ الْحَلِيْمُ لاَ إِلَهَ إِلاَّ اللّٰهُ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ
الْعَظِيْمِ لاَ إِلَهَ إِلاَّ اللّٰهُ رَبُّ السَّمٰوَاتِ السَّبْعِ وَرَبُّ الْعَرْشِ
الْكَرِيْمِ

Also reported in the *Jãmi'* of Imam al-Tirmithi, that Anas, God be pleased with him, narrated that when God's Messenger ﷺ met with a trying circumstance, he used to pray: "O Living Lord and Controller of the universes, I call upon Thy all-encompassing Mercy to grant me an outlet from this imposing hardship." (*Reported by Bukhãri and Muslim*)

يَا حَيُّ يَا قَيُّوْمُ بِرَحْمَتِكَ أَسْتَغِيْثُ

Abu Huraira, God be pleased with him, reported that when God's Messenger ﷺ met with a trying circumstance, he used to raise his hands to the heavens and pray: "Glory be to Allah the Magnificent Lord;" and when he elaborated on his invocations, he added: "O Living Lord and Controller of the universes." (*Reported by Imam Tirmithi*).

Abu Bakr al-Siddïq, God be pleased with him, narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ taught a person in distress to pray: "Lord, I ask for Your Mercy. Let me not follow even for a second the inclinations of my own fancy. Lord, restore my condition for the best. Indeed, there is no god other than You."

اَللّهُمَّ رَحْمَتَكَ أَرْجُوْ فَلاَ تَكِلْنِي إِلَى نَفْسِي طَرْفَةَ عَيْنٍ
وَأَصْلِحْ لِي شَأْنِي لاَ إِلَهَ إِلاَّ أَنْتَ

Also reported in *Sunan Abi Dãwoud*, Asmã', daughter of 'Umays, narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ said to her: "Let me teach you a few words you can say when you are distraught or struck by worries, or when you anticipate them. Say: 'Allah is my Lord, I associate no one with Him.' " In another narration, it is said that this prayer may be repeated seven times.

اللهُ رَبِّي لاَ أُشْرِكُ بِهِ شَيْئًا

Ibn Mas'oud narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Whenever a servant is seized by worries, struck by apprehension, or visited with trials, he should pray: 'Lord, I am Thy servant, whose father and mother are Thy servants; my fate is in Thy Hand; my destiny is moving according to Thy plan. Thou art indeed just in Thy judgement. I call upon Thy Holy Names, and every Holy Attribute Thou proclaimed in Thy Kingdom, or revealed in Thy Book, or taught to any privileged servant, or kept as Thy sole secret. Lord, make the glorious Qur'an the prime of my heart, the light of my soul, and the manifest grace that dispels my sorrow and concerns.' Whoever pray thus, Allah will abolish his worries, dispel his distress, and replace them with joy." (*Reported in the Masnad of Imam Ahmad*)

اَللّهُمَّ إِنِّي عَبْدُكَ ابْنُ عَبْدِكَ ابْنُ أَمَتِكَ نَاصِيَتِي بِيَدِكَ
مَاضٍ فِيَّ حُكْمُكَ عَدْلٌ فِيَّ قَضَاؤُكَ أَسْأَلُكَ بِكُلِّ اِسْمٍ
هُوَ لَكَ سَمَّيْتَ بِهِ نَفْسَكَ أَوْ أَنْزَلْتَهُ فِي كِتَابِكَ أَوْ عَلَّمْتَهُ
أَحَدًا مِنْ خَلْقِكَ أَوِ اسْتَأْثَرْتَ بِهِ فِي عِلْمِ الْغَيْبِ عِنْدَكَ
أَنْ تَجْعَلَ الْقُرْآنَ الْكَرِيمَ رَبِيعَ قَلْبِي وَنُورَ صَدْرِي وَجَلاَءَ
حُزْنِي وَذَهَابَ هَمِّي

Sa'ad bin Abi Waqqãss narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ once related the supplication of God's prophet Jonah, peace be upon him, when he was in the belly of the whale, and which says: "There is no god other than You. Glory be to You. Indeed I have erred."

لاَ إِلَهَ إِلاَّ أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينْ

God's Messenger ﷺ added: "If any Muslim in distress or in dire need ever invokes this supplication, his prayer will surely be answered, and Allah will alleviate his sufferings." (*Reported by Imam al-Tirmithi*)

Abi Sa'ïd al-Khidri narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ once saw a man called Abu Umãma sitting alone in the mosque outside the prayer time and looking worried. God's Messenger ﷺ asked him: "Why are you sitting alone at this hour, O Abu Umãma?" He replied: "Some old debts that are hard to meet, and constant worries, O Messenger of God." God's Messenger ﷺ then said: "Would you like me to teach you a few words? When you say them, Allah will dispel your worries and help you pay off your debts." Abu Umãma replied: "Indeed, O Messenger of God." God's Messenger ﷺ then said: "Pray every morning and evening: 'Lord, I seek refuge in You from distress and sorrow, from weakness, procrastination, and cowardice, and I seek refuge in You from indebtedness, and from subjugation to people's inequity.' " Abu Umãma added: "I did so, and Allah dispelled all my worries and helped me pay off my debts." (*Reported in Sunan Abu Dãwoud*)

اَللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْهَمِّ وَالْحَزَنِ وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ
الْعَجْزِ وَالْكَسَلِ وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْجُبْنِ وَالْبُخْلِ وَأَعُوذُ
بِكَ مِنْ غَلَبَةِ الدَّيْنِ وَقَهْرِ الرِّجَالِ

Ibn 'Abbãss narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Allah will dispel his worries of one who regularly prays for forgiveness. He will lead him out of trying situations, and grant him earnings from sources he does not anticipate." (*Reported in Sunan Abu Dãwoud*)

It is also narrated in the *masnad* that whenever God's Messenger ﷺ experienced difficulties, he hastened to prayers, remarking that God Almighty said: ❮ Find strength in exercising patience, and in prayers. ❯ (*Qur'an 2:45*)

Ibn 'Abbãss narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "When overwhelmed with worries and dispiritedness, one should oft-recite: 'There is no will or power except that of Allah.' "

لاَ حَوْلَ وَلاَ قُوَّةَ إِلاَّ بِاللهِ

This prayer is also authenticated in the two collections of correct prophetic traditions (sahïh) to be one of the hidden treasures of paradise.

Should these prayers not effect a cure for one's worries, grief, and dispiritedness, it means that one's condition is serious, and requires thorough cleansing of his system through complete purgation or detoxification, followed by sincere repentance and assiduous devotion.

The above prayers represent fourteen kinds of spiritual remedies, including:

1- Recognizing the Oneness of the divine sustaining attributes (*Rubübiyya*);
2- Recognizing the Oneness of the divine controlling attributes (*Ulühiyya*);
3- Cognizing of the 'fait accompli', and the manifest fact of God's supremacy through logical signs, with absolute faith regarding their source;
4- Acknowledging that God Almighty is free from injustice, and that He will never cause His servant any hardships without necessity or reason;
5- Confessing that imperfection and failure are the servant's own;
6- Imploring God Almighty by His divine Names and Attributes, which are revelations His creation must recognize, and among them is the most embracing and comprehensive of attributes: Al-Hayy (*The Living*), and Al-Quyyüm (*The Controller*);
7- Soliciting only His help;
8- Confession of the servant that Allah is the only provider that can fulfill one's needs, and that He is the only One to be sought;
9- Confirming one's dependence on Him, relying on Him, and acknowledging that one's destiny is moving according to the divine plan; that He alone has the power to change it; that what He has decreed is pursuing its course, and that His ordinance is just;
10- Soliciting the blessing of understanding the divine revelation, living by it, and to recognizing it as the light of one's heart and soul. Through it, one will eschew dubiety, defeat craving, overcome passion and lust, and dispel darkness. Soliciting

the blessings of regularly reciting the divine revelation also comforts one's heart, and helps focus one's intention beyond material losses, and attunes one's attachment to what is lasting versus what is ephemeral;

11- Asking forgiveness for one's sins;

12- Repenting for one's wrongdoing,

13- Taking the course of prayers to receive guidance; and finally,

14- Disclaiming any will or power to effect things, and rightly attributing all will and power to God Almighty alone.

2.4 The Agency Effecting The Cure

Allah created the son of Adam, and He provided each limb of his body with its own balance and perfection. Should the limb sense any imbalance in the standard of its innate excellence, or failure in its natural functions, it will feel pain. Allah also provided the heart, which is king of the body, with its own balance and perfection. Should the heart become divested, and lose such equilibrium, it will feel pain, suffering, distress, depression, anxiety, and sorrow. Like that, if the eye loses its power of seeing, and the ear loses its power of hearing, and the tongue loses its power of speech, they lose their purpose and become bereft of their perfection.

The heart was created innately to recognize its Creator, love Him, celebrate His praises, glorify His Oneness, feel satisfaction in His presence, rejoice at knowing Him, and to be satisfied with His control and management of everything. The heart was created to be content with its Lord and with His decisions, to trust in Him, to rely on Him, to love what He loves, to hate what He hates, to defend His Name, to love those who defend His Name, and to constantly be mindful of Him, to be filled with Him, and to keep His remembrance. The heart was created to have no greater love than that for its Lord, to find no satisfaction in other than Him, to revere nothing more than Him, and the heart was created to know no joy, comfort, peace, pleasure, or even to feel alive, in other than that. Such knowledge is the needed nourishment the heart requires to exist. Should the heart lack any of such natural nutrients, it will definitely feel sick, and consequently be overwhelmed with worries, sorrow, anxiety, dissatisfaction, burdens, and concerns. It will feel that every calamity is descending upon it, and it becomes a victim and a hostage of their pounding.

The greatest enemies of the heart are: polytheism; sins; and heedlessness; to treat indifferently what God Almighty regards as cordial; judging carelessly what He considers important;

discounting the knowledge and revelations of one's Creator; loving other than Him; soliciting gratification in other than Him; feeling satisfaction in other than His presence; associating partners to His control and management of the universes; objecting to His decisions; lacking trust in Him; relying on other than Him; loving other than what He loves; desiring what He hates; hating His decree; speaking His Name in vain; associating with those who use His Name blasphemously; being heedless of Him; thinking little of Him; refusing to be reminded of Him; doubting His promise; taking lightly His warnings; seeking joy, comfort, peace, and pleasure in other than His company; and lastly, feeling alive in other than Him.

Such sickness will definitely cause one to suffer from worries, sorrow, anxiety, distress, dissatisfaction, disheartenments, burdens, and concerns. If one examines the majority of heart ailments, he will surely find some of the above diseases and similar ones lurking therein, and the real medicine for such illnesses is in what is described earlier in the blessed prophetic teachings. In fact, as we discussed in an earlier chapter, every illness must be met with its opposite, and good health is preserved with its analogue.

Thus, one's health must be preserved with the best of traditions, and those are the traditions of God's Messenger ﷺ, while illnesses are caused by opposing them. From these traditions one recognizes that: (1) faith in God's Oneness (*tawhid*) opens the door of blessings, comfort, peace, joy, protection, and satisfaction; (2) repentance helps the purgation of bad temperaments (*akhlāṯ*) and corrupt substances that are the immediate cause of diseases, and it helps one to abstain from mixing opposing elements. Hence, the door of blessings and happiness opens through recognition of God's Oneness, while repentance and asking for God's forgiveness for one's sins closes off the door of evil and harm.

Thābit bin Qarrah once commented that "physical wellness comes from limiting one's intake of food; the wellness of one's soul comes from abstaining from the unlawful; and protecting one's tongue comes from limiting one's speech." An Arab physician once said: "To keep good health one should eat less, and to keep a pure heart, one must abstain from the unlawful." In fact, sins are poisons for the heart, and even if they do not kill it, they will definitely weaken it. Once the heart is weakened, it has little resistance to common diseases. The physician of hearts, Shaikh 'Abdullāh bin al-Mubārak once said: "Sin deadens the heart, and addiction to sin begets humiliation. Shunning sin revives the

heart, and it is better to oppose one's burning desire and to control his passion."

In this sense, passion and lust are fatal diseases, and opposing them is the best medicine. On the other hand, the carnal self (*nafs*) was created ignorant, unjust, and blind to its own wrongdoing. The carnal self believes that its cure consists of systematically satisfying its desire and lust for things, while in fact, nurturing such desires is the immediate cause of its blight and consequent destruction. Its malfeasance and bias beget arrogance and rejection of any advice. Instead, addiction is a lethal sickness that considers the disease as a cure, and the cure a disease. Such illnesses mostly baffle the minds of physicians when they try to diagnose them, and consequently, they often fail to cure them. The worst happens when the carnal self initially attributes its illness to fate, and refuses to accept responsibility, and indirectly, it accuses its Lord and Cherisher of causing such harm. When the illness intensifies, and the sick carnal self finds no escape from it predicament, it blames its Lord overtly, and the tongue then dares to utter blasphemous accusations against its Lord. What a wonder! When the sickness reaches this stage, only a divine act of mercy can save the carnal self, give it a new life, and guide it to the correct way of repentance and asking for forgiveness.

This explains the "Prayer of Distress" in the saying of Ibn 'Abbãss, God be pleased with him, who narrated that during adversities, God's Messenger ﷺ used to pray: "There is no god other than Allah, the Magnificent, the Forbearing. There is no god other than Allah, the Sustainer of the Glorious Throne. There is no god other than Allah, the Sustainer of the seven firmaments and the earth, and He is the bounteous Sustainer of the Divine Throne."

And his other prayer during trying circumstances: "O Living Lord and Controller of the universes, I call upon Thy all-encompassing Mercy to grant me an outlet (from this imposing hardship)."

Such invocations glorify the Oneness of the divine sustaining attributes (*Rubübiyya*), and that of His supreme lordship, sovereignty, and controlling attributes (*Ulühiyya*). They also recognize the attribute of glory and forbearance, both of which comprise the perfection of the divine power, mercy and control of the condition and state of His creation. Furthermore, they expressly describe the perfection of His supremacy over the entire creation, in both the upper realms, and the nether worlds. They also authenticate the absolute control of His Throne, which encompasses the entire

universes, and which represents a ceiling over the creation, and which is in itself the most glorious creation of God Almighty. Such divine attributes are most powerful and imposing, though with great subtlety, and they certainly promulgate recognition of His Oneness and His perfect sustaining attributes. Such absolute lordship calls upon the creation to recognize that perfection belongs only to Allah, and such supreme and perfect lordship necessitates directing the creation's focus, intention, heart, worship, love, fear, reverence, hope, obedience, and devotion to none besides Him. On the other hand, His absolute, all-encompassing, and sovereign Glory necessitates attributing any imperfection to one's own limitations, and to reject the inane human concept of theomorphism, and making an image of God. Furthermore, the divine perfect attribute of the all-forbearing Lord, the permeation of His divine knowledge in each and every atom throughout the entire universes, nourishing, sustaining, and providing for their needs, and the creation's own innate certainty of where to turn for their needs — all that knowledge which He imparted to the human heart proves His compassion towards His creation.

When the human heart recognizes and confesses to such irrefutable truth, it will naturally love Him, revere Him, and attest to His Oneness. Such realization brings joy and happiness to one's heart, and subsequently dispels worries, distress, anxiety, disheartenments, rock-heartedness, and overcomes even physical illnesses. You may notice the same thing by observing a sick person when he hears good news, and how this strengthens his natural body defenses, or innate heat, and helps expel his disease. In fact, the human heart is more sensitive and susceptible to such phenomenon. If one compares the tight feelings caused by depression, worries, and anxiety, with the relaxed feelings of comfort, peace, tranquility, and spaciousness, he will certainly find such healing attributes present in the abovementioned prayer of the distressed. Such knowledge is evident in one who is blessed with faith, who is radiant with the light of truth, and whose heart is permeated with truth and reality.

As for the invocation "O Living Lord and Controller of the universes, I call upon Thy all-encompassing Mercy to grant me an outlet from this imposing hardship," in this prayer, one finds a magnificent representation for the attribute of life (*Al-Hayy*), which encompasses all the attributes of perfection and confirms them, while the divine controlling attribute (*Al-Quyyūm*), comprises all the attributes and powers of action. This is why this divine attribute is called God's august and most supreme name (*Ismu'l-*

lāhi'l A'zam). Whoever calls by it, his prayer shall be answered, and whoever asks by it, his needs shall certainly be satisfied. This is God's divine Name *Al-Hayy-ul-Quyyūm*.

Hence, the absolute life is the opposite of all ailments and sufferings. That is why people's existence and life in paradise (*Janna*), does not know stress, anxiety, pain, sufferings, or any imperfection, while any imperfection in life (*hayāt*) in this world, or actions is the opposite to the reality of the perfect control over everything (*Quyyoumiyya*). Hence, the perfection of the Divine Controller is one and the same perfection of the Living Lord, and the absolute living Lord never lacks perfection, and everything is subject to whatever changes *Al-Quyyūm* alone can effect. Therefore, calling upon His attribute the Living-Controller will surely cure the illness and affect the opposite of life, or any fallacious human claim to perfection. This is clear in the invocation of God's Messenger ﷺ who prayed to his Cherisher and Sustainer by the attribute of His sustaining Lordship (*Rubūbiyya*) of Jibreel, Mīkā'eel, and Isrāfeel to guide him, and to help him triumph over what the incredulous clans argued, and to guide him, for the heart is alive with the divine guidance, and is dead without it. Almighty Allah has allocated to these three exalted archangels the agency and duty of serving life. Jibreel was put in charge of carrying the divine revelations (*wahi*), and that is life for the hearts; Mīkā'eel was put in charge of water, and that is life for every earthly existence and its surrounding atmospheres; and Isrāfeel was put in charge of blowing the trumpet of life, which is the agency of existence of the entire universes, and of the resurrection of bodies back into life when on the Day of Judgement, he blows the souls into them anew, by God's leave. Therefore, imploring Him by His *Rubūbiyya*, *Ulūhiyya*, and *Quyyoumiyya* upon these three blessed and most exalted souls that represent the agency of life itself will certainly bring about the needed effects and the answer to one's prayers by God's leave. The point here is that the divine attribute the Living-Controller provides a sure answer to one's prayers and in dispelling his adversities.

It is narrated in sahīh Abi Hātim and confirmed by Imam al-Tirmithi, that God's most glorious Name is in the verses: ❮ Your Lord is One, there is no god other than Him, the Merciful, the Compassionate. ❯ (*Qur'an 2:163*) and in the opening verse of Chapter 3, Āl-'Imrān which recites as follows: ❮ Allah. There is no god except Him. The Ever Living, the Sovereign Controller. ❯ (*Qur'an 3:1*) We also find in other collections of correct prophetic traditions, including sahīh Abi Hayyān, a saying narrated by Anas, God be

pleased with him, that a man prayed: "O God. I ask You by the power of 'All praises be to God', surely there is no god other than You, the sole Creator and Originator of the entire heavens and the earth, and what they encompass; O Lord of Majesty and bounty; O Living-Controller..." Anas added that when God's Messenger ﷺ heard this prayer, he commented: "Indeed, he has called upon God's most glorious Name. Whoever calls upon it, his prayer will be answered, and whoever asks by it, his needs will be satisfied." This is why whenever God's Messenger ﷺ saw his followers encountering trying adversities, he ardently prayed: *"Yã Hayyu Yã Quyyüm."*

As for his prayer: "Lord, I ask for Thy Mercy. Let me not follow the inclinations of my own fancy for even a second. Lord, restore my condition for the best. Indeed, there is no god other than You" — in this invocation, there is clear attestation that all good is in God's Hands, and that the servant turns naturally to Him for all his needs, trusts in Him, depends on Him, relies upon Him to restore his condition for the best, and he implores his Lord to be his sole recourse, to satisfy all the needs of the servant's journey in this world, and whatever help this segment of life may require. Furthermore, imploring God Almighty by the absolute sovereignty of His attribute and power of Oneness (*tawhid*) will surely prove most effective in expelling a disease. The same benefits come from his prayer: "Allah is my only Lord and Sustainer. I associate no one with Him."

اللهُ رَبِّي لاَ أُشْرِكُ بِهِ شَيْئًا

As for the prophetic prayer which is narrated by Ibn Mas'oud: "Lord: I am Thy servant, whose father and mother are Thy servants..." this invocation embodies the core of knowledge and recognition (*Gnosis*) of God Almighty, and the secrets of worship, and no single book can ever detail their full meaning. Yet, this prayer is full of recognition of who is God, and in it, the worshiper calling upon his Lord, acknowledges his Creator, and presents himself as God's servant, and the son of His servants. The caller also places things were they belong by recognizing that his fate is in God's Hand; that his destiny is moving according to the divine plan; that God Almighty does whatever He pleases with it; that the servant can neither bring benefits nor harm to himself; that he cannot bring about his own birth, death, or resurrection; that his destiny is in God's Hand; that he has no power to alter it except as God wills; that he is totally dependent on his Creator, Cherisher, Sustainer,

and Lord; that his own existence is subject to whatever GodAlmighty decrees; and that Allah is just, and what He wills shall be.

Then comes his invocation: "My fate is in Thy Hand, and my destiny is moving according to Thy plan. Thou art indeed just in Thy judgement..." This section of the prayer embodies two cardinal aspects which are the core of the doctrine of monotheism (*tawhīd*): (1) the first is the recognition and confirmation of fate, and that God's decree regarding His servant shall unfailingly come into force, and that the servant cannot escape it or repel it; and (2) the second aspect proclaims that Allah is just, that He does not oppress His servants, and that what He decrees is due by virtue of divine justice and knowledge of such needs. This is because injustice represents the need, ignorance, incompetence, weakness, and inferiority of an unjust person, and therefore, such attributes are not divine, and they cannot emanate from one who is omniscient, all-knowing, wise, and has no needs. Hence, God's wisdom is operative wherever His will is ordained. Allah is rich beyond any need, and everything is poor and seeks its nourishment from Him. He is All-Wise, and there is not a single atom throughout the entire universes where His will is not operative. The absolute dependence of each and every cell in the entire creation, and their soliciting of their support and sustenance from the sole and only provider requires their gratitude. Hence, gratitude (*shukur*) is rewarded with blessings, and ingratitude (*kufur*) is rewarded with disapprobation and consequent punishment for the unrepenting ones.

When the unrepenting and ungrateful disbelievers and idol worshipers threatened God's prophet Hūd, peace be upon him, to invoke the curse of their deities upon him, he replied: ❮ I call Allah to witness, and you bear witness that I am innocent regarding what you ascribe as partners to Him. Therefore, scheme (your worst) against me, and grant me no respite. I put my trust in Allah, my Lord and your Lord. There is not a moving creature whose forelock is not (held firmly) in His Hand. My Lord is surely on a straight path, ❯ (*Qur'an 11:54-56*) — meaning that God's power which is unlimited and unrestrained is operative over all creatures, and no one can withstand His decree. He alone has the power to move them as He pleases, and He does so rightly, justly, wisely, and mercifully.

In this prayer, the servant's proclamation: "My destiny is moving according to Thy plan," means the same as ❮ There is not a moving creature whose forelock is not (held firmly) in His Hand, ❯ and

his saying: "Thou art indeed just in Thy judgement," is also parallel to ‹ My Lord is surely on a straight path. › Furthermore, God's Messenger ﷺ, calls in this prayer upon God's most holy Name, and the divine attribute He proclaimed in His kingdom, revealed in a Book, taught to a privileged servant, or kept as His sole secret, so that no angel of the nearest and most exalted status, and no prophet or messenger has ever known to ask by it. Such invocation surpasses all supplications, and of all prayers is the dearest to Him, and most worthy of immediate reply, because it proves the servant's knowledge and recognition of his Lord.

God's Messenger ﷺ then prayed to God Almighty to make the glorious Qur'an the prime of his heart, meaning the spiritual food of his body, mind, and soul, and through it, to wash away, dispel, and cure his stresses, worries, and concerns, making it the one conclusive medicine that will extract illnesses, and restore the human being to his true status and balance. Hence, he asked his Lord to make the Qur'an the light of his soul that removes any corrosion that tarnishes his clarity and wisdom, and that polishes his heart. Such medicine works only if the patient is truthful in his asking for it, sincere in his trust in its effectiveness, and uses it as prescribed by his physician. Hence, God willing, the correct use of the medicine will certainly be followed by complete recovery, excellent health, and vitality—and God is the Supreme helper.

As for the prayer of God's prophet Jonah, peace and blessings be upon him, which says: "There is no god other than You. Glory be to You. Indeed I have erred" — this prayer extols the utmost truth of God's Oneness, extirpates the concept of human participation in the making of the divine will, and is a confession of the servant's own injustice and sinfulness. This prayer can yield the ultimate remedy for distress, worries, anxiety, and depression, and it represents the supreme vehicle for receiving a sure answer. In fact, acknowledging God's Oneness and desisting from accusing Him of injustice, affirms that perfection belongs only to Allah, that His justice is immaculate, and eliminates the blind human concept of anthropomorphic elements in God. Furthermore, the servant's confession of his own injustice and sinfulness does reflect his faith and trust in the divine jurisprudence, the reward for his good deeds, and punishment for his sins. Such awakening proves the servant's need to return to his Lord; to retrace his steps; to repent of his sins; to humbly bow before his Lord; to ask for His forgiveness, and it includes a clear confession of one's dependence

on God's provision and mercy. These are four successful agencies for prayer, namely: (1) belief in God's Oneness; (2) refuting imperfection in God's justice; (3) acknowledgment by the creation of its status; and (4) confession to one's culpability.

As for the prophetic prayer which God's Messenger ﷺ taught to Abi Umāma: "Lord, I seek refuge in You from distress and sorrow, from weakness and procrastination, from stinginess and cowardice. I seek refuge in You from indebtedness, and from subjugation to people's inequity" — this prayer includes asking for the divine protection from eight human characteristics, each two manifesting together in some manner of union. Distress is associated with sorrow, weakness is associated with procrastination, stinginess is associated with cowardice, and indebtedness is associated with subjugation to people's inequity. When a hurtful feeling visits one's heart, the cause could either come from past experience of losses, giving rise to sorrow, or from anticipation, developing into worries and distress. Such state contributes to the servant's failure to attend to his prescribed duties, and overshadows his thoughts and actions, causing weakness to his body and mind, and a psychological resistance to fulfilling his obligations and duties. In this sense, one's reaction will hamper his own benefits as well as obstruct others' benefits. To refrain from benefiting others physically means cowardice, and to withhold material benefits means stinginess and inequity towards others. Therefore, if one is rightly pursued and pressured to pay his debts, this could effect his religious and spiritual progress, and when wrongfully or unjustly persecuted, this represents subjugation to people's inequity. This prophetic saying is in fact a prayer for seeking refuge in God's protection from every evil.

As for the benefits of asking for forgiveness (*istighfār*) for dispelling sorrow, stress, depression, and anxiety, it is common knowledge among religious scholars that sins beget worries, fear, sadness, uptightness, disquietude, and heart ailments. People who indulge in corruption and sinful actions — regardless of their psychological disposition, and weakness of their faith, and even after fully satisfying their minds, desires, and wantonness — they still seek the medicine of regret, asking for forgiveness, and promising what they cannot fulfill to cure their sufferings because of the burdening pain and heaviness they feel in their hearts regarding forbidden actions, excesses or intemperances. A corrupt Shaikh once said to express his repentance:

One glass of wine I tossed craving ecstasy,
and the second I had
to remove the burden of my sorrow and regret.

When such are the effects of sins and corruption upon the hearts, there is no cure for them except repentance and asking for forgiveness.

2.5 The Benefits of Ritual Prayers (*Salāt*)

As for the role of regular ritual prayers (*Salāt*) in relieving the burdens of worries, depressions, anxiety, stress from one's heart and in healing its ills, one must realize that there is nothing higher, more exalted, more redeeming, more rejuvenating, more satisfying, more gratifying, more comforting, more intelligent, and more beautiful than standing before one's Creator, bowing to Him, and connecting one's heart and soul with Allah's presence and nearness, rejoicing in the resonance of invoking His praises, immersing one's entire existence, consciousness, body, mind, soul, and functions in the most exhilarating spiritual and physical experiences of the ritual prayers. In ritual prayers, one engages his entire being, limbs, veins, arteries, bones, pores, and every cell of his body in communion with their Creator, and he separates himself, his thoughts, attention, focus, gaze and regards towards everything but his Lord. In ritual prayers, one also turns off his motor function of attachment to the world, its creation, business, concerns, infatuations, mundane conversations, and confusions, and he radiates with the effulgent light of his Creator, turns on the inerrant magnet of devotion and worship, and stands before Him with his entire being, his heart, soul, and body, and gives each limb its rightful chance to worship its Lord, and to wash itself with the tears of love and yearning to meet Him, the tears of expiating one's sins, and the tears that draw God's love and compassion to forgive His servant his sins, and to raise him in station. Each limb will function according to its primordial attributes. The heart will become drawn to its Creator and Originator, and it will rest in the most momentous and magnificent peace of His presence. Such are the healing powers of *Salāt*. It is food for the body and soul.

The peace, joy, happiness, comfort, satisfaction, and spiritual ecstasy are only some of the benefits a healthy heart is accustomed to partaking of. Sometimes, such noble and delicate nutrients may not even be suitable for a sick heart which acts just like a sick body. In its case, prayers (*Salāt*) are its best recourse to

receive the needed help and to serve its interests in this world and in the hereafter. *Salāt* also helps the heart to repel the adversities in this world and those in the hereafter, and it acts as a shield against falling into sin and wrongdoing. God willing, an unadulterated prayer can prevent physical illnesses, or even cure a physical illness. A true prayer sheds light on one's heart, lights his face, refreshes his body, awakens his soul, blesses his earnings, repels inequities, frustrates illicit thoughts, and neutralizes unlawful desires, and a true prayer also cools God's wrath, delivers His mercy, compassion, and forgiveness for His servant.

As for the role of the ritual prayers in curing physical illness, it is reported in *Sunan* Ibn Māja that God's Messenger ﷺ once saw Abu Huraira resting and complaining of stomach pain. He asked him: "Abu Huraira, is your stomach hurting you?" He replied in the affirmative. God's Messenger ﷺ then said: "Stand up and pray, for there a cure in prayers." If the heart of a secular physician does not agree or feel comfortable with this level of remedy, then he must be addressed in terms relating to the medical profession. It is also said that ritual prayers are healthy sport for the body and the heart. They incorporate a workout for the entire body, including: standing up, bowing, prostrating, sitting, and their repetition in each prayer several times a day. Such movements help one's muscles and most of his joints, and ease the blood flow of his arteries, and provide natural gentle exercise for his stomach, bowels, and lungs.

On the other hand, the illnesses of atheism, secularism, profanity, arguing against God's commands, refusing to follow the instructions of His blessed messengers, fighting the believers, dodging one's responsibilities in order to obtain temporary selfish gains, and showing ingratitude to one's Lord while depending on His provision, etcetera — such attempts to reverse the ethics and values our Creator instituted for humankind, and the fabrication of secular laws and amendments to God's laws, such arrogance and hardening of the heart — all such illnesses can only become malleable again through exposure to the intense heat of hell-fire. Of course, this is the medicine of the unlucky ones. God Almighty says: ❴ This admonition will be avoided by the most unfortunate ones — those who will enter the great fire, in which they will neither dies nor live. ❵ *(Qur'an 87:11-13)* ❴ Therefore, I warn you of a blazing fire, which is reserved for the unfortunate one, who negated the truth and turned his back to it. ❵ *(Qur'an 92:15-16)*

As for the benefits of oft-reciting: "There is no will or power except that of Allah' (*Lā hawla wa lā quwwata illa billāh*)" —

this prayer has the power to expel physical, mental and emotional illnesses by the mere truth of placing things where they belong; by relinquishing one's claim of authority over the authentic and original one; by putting an end to perceiving things with his selfish ephemeral endeavors; by submitting to the divine will, and confessing and passing such authority to the true Controller Whose power encompasses all changes that take effect in the upper and lower realms. Besides the power of this prayer to expel evils spirits, there is a common notion among the believers that no angel can descend from the heavens or ascend to them except by the magnificent will of Allah, Lord, Creator, Cherisher, and Sustainer of the universes.

2.6 Prayers To Overcome Apprehension, Fear, And Insomnia

Imam al-Tirmithi reported in his *sahīh* that Khalid once complained to God's Messenger ﷺ about sleeplessness and tension. God's Messenger ﷺ said to him: "When you go to bed, pray: 'O Allah, Thou art Lord of the seven heavens and what they shelter, and the two earths and the lives they support. Thy power can surely control and restrain the devils who mislead the faithful. Lord, be Thou my protector and neighbor. Shelter me from any evil that may spur from Thy creation, so that none of them may assail me in my rest, or infringe upon my privacy. Indeed, Thy neighbors are strong and safe in Thy protection. What Thou commends is unassailable. Indeed, Thou alone art God.' "

اللهُ رَبُّ السَّمَوَاتِ السَّبْعِ وَمَا أَظَلَّتْ وَرَبُّ الأَرْضَيْن
وَمَا أَقَلَّتْ وَرَبُّ الشَّيَاطِيْن وَمَا أَضَلَّتْ كُنْ لِي جَاراً مِنْ
شَرِّ خَلْقِكَ جَمِيْعًا أَن يَفْرُطَ عَلَيَّ أَحَدٌ مِنْهُمْ أَوْ يَبْغِيَ
عَلَيَّ عَزَّ جَارُكَ وَجَلَّ ثَنَاؤُكَ وَلاَ إِلَهَ غَيْرُكَ

In the same reference book, 'Amru bnu Shu'aib learned from his grandfather that God's Messenger ﷺ used to teach them a special prayer to alleviate fear, which says: "I seek refuge in the protection of God's perfect words from His wrath, from His punishment of the evildoers, from any evil that may spur from His creation, and from the prodding of the devils, and I seek His protection from their coming near me."

أَعُوْذُ بِكَلِمَاتِ اللهِ التَّامَّةِ مِنْ غَضَبِه وَعِقَابِه وَشَرِّ
عِبَادِه وَمِنْ هَمَزَاتِ الشَّيَاطِيْنِ وَأَعُوْذُ بِكَ رَبِّ أَنْ
يَحْضُرُوْنِ

'Abdullãh, son of Omar, used to teach this prayer to his children who reached the age of understanding, and as for the younger ones, he used to write this prayer and made them carry it as an amulet around their neck.

2.7 Extinguishing Fire With Prayers

Also in the same reference book, 'Amru bnu Shu'aib learned from his grandfather that God's Messenger ﷺ once said: "If you see a raging fire, immediately invoke God's supremacy over it by saying: '*Allahu Akbar*' (Allah is the greatest of all)." This prayer also has benefits in limiting pain caused by burns.

Since fire is the element from which jinn were created, and that is the category of creation to which Satan belongs, and since Satan and his army of evildoers have always led the cause of haughtiness, corruption, and destruction on earth—earning them God's eternal and irrevocable curse and wrath—when fire is kindled, it seeks higher spheres and causes destruction by consuming anything it reaches. Such destructive qualities of haughtiness, arrogance, and corruption are qualities of the deceptive coaching Satan offers his followers. Both fire and Satan claim greatness and haughtiness, and both cause nothing but corruption on earth. Whoever among the children of Adam embraces such qualities or any of their offshoots is doomed to a painful and perpetual destruction in hell-fire. Haughtiness and arrogance are not allowed before the divine glory and magnitude of Almighty Allah. Hence, invoking the divine attribute '*Allahu Akbar*' will surely quell mischief, limit damage, and cut off the possible spread of fire. When a believer invokes God's glory, nothing can stand against it. Both fire and Satan—who was created from fire—will back off and be reduced to nothingness before the proclamation of God's glory, and both will recognize His supremacy. Our Shaikh added: "We as well as many people have invoked His supremacy when we saw fire, and this invocation of the divine name proved indubitable—God knows best.

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1 Cf. Treatment of Headache & Hemicrania; Treatment of Insomnia.

2
General Prophetic Guidelines In Preventive Medicine

The Balance of Moisture and Heat

Moisture is essential for a healthy body, and the body depends on it to resist and balance heat. On the other hand, heat helps its coction to expel ejecta and extract the needed nutrients. Otherwise, unbalanced moisture will vitiate and hamper the body's natural functions. Moisture is an essential element for heat, and without it, temperature will rise, and the body will dry up and spoil. Therefore, moisture and heat complement one another, and together they help balance body's functions. Any increase in either one of the two will generate imbalance. Heat constantly consumes and depletes moisture and the body requires food and water to renew its balance. On the other hand, excess moisture lowers body temperature and affects the process of coction and elimination of ejecta. Otherwise, if such matters remain in the body, they become putrescent and spread to cause various kinds of illnesses. The degree of their effectiveness depends on their kind, the body's condition, and its disposition to accept related illnesses.

Such knowledge comes from the divine words of guidance: ❮ Eat and drink, but avoid excess, for Allah does not like the intemperate. ❯ (*Qur'an 7:31*) In this revelation, God Almighty directs the believers (1) to observe balance in their intake of food and drink; (2) to take in what is beneficial and control their desire for excess; (3) to balance their diet; (4) to eat and drink healthy food; and (5) to take in what the body can easily digest in kind, quantity, and preparation. Both deficiency in nutrients or their saturation can hinder absorption and cause illness, while avoidance of such formula is considered excess. Unbalanced absorption of nutrients also lowers body temperature and affects coction. Lower body temperature hinders food digestion, while prolonged lower temperature will eventually exhaust the required balance of heat and moisture, extinguish body heat and lead to the end of one's life term in this world.

The foremost intention in preventive medicine is to preserve a healthy body throughout the stages of its existence for the longest possible period until the conclusion of its life term in this world. This is to say that one's endeavors cannot permanently sustain perfect balance of heat and moisture, both of which are essential

to preserve body strength and youthfulness, for such permanency has never been the lot of any creature in this world. Nevertheless, the goal of a physician or a physical therapist in preventive medicine is to support maintaining the needed balance between heat and moisture in the process of supporting the real goal of one's life in this world — that is, to worship his Lord. Hence, preventive medicine is aimed at protecting body moisture against vitiation caused by the presence of adulterated or putrescent elements, among others, and to guard the level of body temperature against rising or dropping, to eliminate the possibility of any complications.

Because of such important balance, the human body subsists throughout its life, and in a similar process of balance and divine justice, the heavens, the two earths, and the entire creation continue to exist. Nothing can harm such balance more than nurturing the body with excess, injurious, or unlawful substance. Similarly, nothing can harm the innate purity of the heart more than polytheism, sins, and heedlessness. Owing to such afflictions, the heart becomes worried, sorrowful, anxious, distressed, dissatisfied, burdened, concerned, discontent, and weak, and because of such weakness, the heart becomes unable to fend for itself, or to reverse the lethal action of any injurious substance. In such case, after recognizing one's illness and embracing the avenues of repentance, only Allah can turn to the human being with mercy, forgive him, and shift the course of his destiny for the better.

In essence, when contemplating the prophetic guidance of God's Messenger ﷺ, one can easily recognize it as the best of guidance in preventive medicine. In it, one learns to maintain a healthy body, heart, and existence by correctly addressing the issues of balancing one's food, drink, clothing, living conditions, clean air, proper rest, vigilance, exercises, sexual habits, purgation, and abstinence, etcetera. When such issues are correctly balanced to reflect the correct needs of the human body, and when one's intake of food also respects his age, available healthy food, his common habits, environmental conditions, and land, he can maintain good health until the end of his life in this world.

Furthermore, since good health, strength, and well-being are the most prized, precious, and generous gifts God Almighty bestows upon His servants, and particularly the lucky ones, it is incumbent upon the grateful servant, and the temporary custodian of the human body, to protect it against abuse, and to properly guard it against over indulgence. On this subject, Ibn 'Abbãss, God be pleased with him and his father, narrated that God's messenger

ﷺ said: "There are two divine favors of which most people defraud themselves of their benefits: these are: (1) Good health; and (2) constancy." (*Reported by Imam Bukhãri*) In another narration by 'Abdullãh bin Muhsin al-Ansãrí, God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Whoever wakes up having a healthy body, safe in his home, and has the needed supplies for that day, he is as wealthy as if the treasures of this entire world were put at his disposal" (*Reported by Imam al-Tirmithi*). Also on this subject, Abu Huraira, God be pleased with him, narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "One of the first questions which the servant shall be asked on the day of judgement is: 'Have We not given you a healthy body, and quenched your thirst with cold water?' " Some of our predecessors arrived at the interpretation of the same subject in the Qur'anic verse: ❮ And on that day, you shall be asked about the favors (you enjoyed) ❯ (*Qur'an 102:8*), meaning: good health. Also on this subject, we find in the *Masnad* of Imam Ahmad that God's Messenger ﷺ said to al-'Abbãss: "O 'Abbãss, O uncle of God's Messenger: ask Allah for good health and well being in this world and in the hereafter."

Abu Bakr al-Siddïq, God be pleased with him, narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Ask Allah to grant you certitude and well being, for after certitude, no one has ever received a blessing greater than (health and) well being" (*Reported in Masnad of Imam Ahmad*). In this narration, God's Messenger ﷺ has associated between the benefits of the two most precious divine gifts in this world and in the hereafter, for success in both abodes cannot be attained without having certitude, health and well being. Certitude (*yaqïn*) will help the servant eschew the punishment for his sins in the hereafter, while health and well being (*'ãfiya*) will help him avoid the illnesses of this world, both of his body and heart.

In another prophetic saying narrated by Abu Huraira and reported in *Sunan* al-Nisã'i, God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Pray to Allah to grant you pardon, health, and well being, for after certitude, no one has ever received a blessing greater than (health and) well being." These three treasures of Allah's infinite mercy encompass: (1) elimination of the evil consequences of past wrongdoing and sins through absolution; (2) halting the effects of evil consequences of possible pitfalls through strengthening the servant's body, mind, and heart to overcome present dangers; and (3) elimination of evil consequences of future wrongdoing by granting him faith and certitude to guard himself against such possibilities, and to help him pursue this course until the term of his life in this world.

Imam al-Tirmithi reported that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "There is no supplication that is more pleasing to Allah than (that of His servant's) asking Him for (health and) well being."

Abi Darã' narrated that 'Abdu Rahmãn, son of Abi Laila, once said to God's Messenger ﷺ: "O Messenger of God, to be healthy and grateful is more pleasing to me than exercising patience during adversities." God's Messenger ﷺ replied: "God's Messenger agrees with you, and he too prefers to have good health." Also on this subject, Ibn 'Abbãss narrated that an Arab came and asked God's Messenger ﷺ: "What should I ask Allah upon concluding each of the five daily prayers?" God's Messenger ﷺ replied: "Pray for good health." The man further asked: "Then what?" God's Messenger ﷺ reiterated: "Pray for good health." The man asked again: "Then what?" God's Messenger ﷺ replied again: "Pray for good health and well being in this world and in the hereafter."

Therefore, if good health and well being are such prized treasures, then, God willing, we shall in the following sections study the prophetic guidance in maintaining them. Such divine gifts are essential for one's physical and spiritual success in this life and in the next. Allah is our Helper, in Him we trust, and there is no will or power except by Allah.

1. God's Messenger's Food and Drink

God's Messenger ﷺ used to alternate between the different kinds of foods available in the area, and he did not fix his diet on any particular kind of food for any prolonged period of time. In fact, adopting a diet of one kind of food is certainly harmful to one's digestive system. Such diet will weaken the body and can affect the stomach's ability to absorb other kinds of food after eating a monotonous diet for an extended period. This is even true if one depends regularly on any specific kind of food, and even if it were exceptionally rich in particular nutrients.

God's Messenger ﷺ adhered to the staple diet of his surrounding community, including meat, fruits, bread, and dates, besides other supplements mentioned in this book. If a particular food was too pungent and required blanding, he usually added a second ingredient to accomplish the needed balance, such as watermelon to balance the heat of dates, and if he could not find it, or if hunger drove him to eat the one kind of food available, he usually limited his intake of food, and avoided excess. On the other hand, if he felt aversion (*cibophobia*) towards a particular food, or if he did not desire it, he usually declined to eat it, and he never accepted

food that was forced on him. In fact, eating undesired or disagreeable food can cause queasiness, and its harm then becomes greater than its benefit. On this subject, Anas narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ never criticized any food. If he liked it, he ate it, otherwise, he would not touch it. Once someone offered him a dish containing the meat of a broiled lizard, but he did not touch it. When asked whether it was unlawful, he replied: "It is not unlawful, but I am not used to eating it in my homeland, so I felt some aversion to it." He thus gave consideration to his habits and staple food. Since Arabs did not eat lizards, he neither desired it nor forbade eating it.

God's Messenger ﷺ ate meat, and he particularly liked lamb chuck and leg. This is the part with which the Jewish woman tried to poison him at Khybar.[1] In another tradition, it is also narrated in the two collections of correct prophetic traditions (*sahïh*) that Dhabã'a, daughter of al-Zubair, once slaughtered a goat, and God's Messenger ﷺ sent her a message: "Feed us some of your goat." She replied to his bearer: "Only the neck is left, and I shy to send it to God's Messenger ﷺ." He replied: "Go back and tell her to send it, for the neck steers the goat, and the anterior is better than the posterior."

In fact, animals' neck, chuck, shoulder, and front legs have less fat, and are lighter and easier for the stomach to digest. Hence, we recognize from this prophetic guidance that good food must contain three essential components: (1) nutritional benefits and efficiency in producing needed energy; (2) lightness for the stomach; and (3) ease of digestion. However, as a general rule, eating less meat of this category is healthier than eating excess meat from any other part of the animal. God's Messenger ﷺ also liked halva[2] and honey. These three kinds of food, i.e., meat, honey, and dates, contain the best of nutrients and most strengthening for one's body, and only a sufferer from other body ailments may feel some aversion to them. God's Messenger ﷺ regularly ate bread with his food, and sopped his bread with whatever was available (*ïdãm*)[3] such as dates melon, etcetera, though he preferred to sop it in meat sauce or in broth.[4]

Such are some of the practical measures God's Messenger ﷺ used to balance his food, for barley bread is cold and dry, while

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[1] Cf. Treatment of Food Poisoning.

[2] Halva: (Arb. Halwa) Sweets. Prepared from dates and butter and is mixed with honey. Halva can also be made from sesame butter mixed with honey and nuts.

[3] *Ïdãm*: Arb. *n.* Shortening; condiment; *vt.* To enrich.

[4] Cf. Dietary Planning.

dates are hot and moist. Sometimes he would dip his bread in a prepared mixture of vinegar and seasoning (*khall*), as it used to be the custom of the dwellers of Medina. God's Messenger ﷺ ate whatever was available without giving particular preference to one kind of food over another. One time, he came home and asked his family for some food, and they presented him with bread. He asked: "Do you have anything to eat with it?" They replied: "Only vinegar." God's Messenger ﷺ cheerfully replied: "Blessed is such seasoning (*ïdãm*)." Some people without understanding the wisdom of this tradition do regularly eat bread sopped in vinegar. In his case, God's Messenger ﷺ blessed and ate what was put before him, and in no way made eating bread and vinegar a traditional way of eating, as some people do up to this day. The point here is in regularly eating bread[1] with one's meal for a better upkeep of his health.

God's Messenger ﷺ also ate the fresh seasonal fruit of the land. Fresh fruits are one of the best sources of nutrients and they eliminate the need for several kinds of medicines. Rarely did God's Messenger ﷺ refuse the fresh fruit of a land, except if they were contaminated. Fresh fruits also carry the moisture and heat of the land and the natural temperature of the season, while the body temperature helps their coction and the elimination of ejecta. This is unless one overindulge in them, thus overburdening his digestive organs, or if he spoil the digestive process by drinking water immediately after eating fruit, or eating a meal after eating fruit, or by merely eating anything else before a complete digestion. Such practice often causes colic infections (Arb. *qaulanj*). Hence, moderately eating fresh fruit in season is healthy, otherwise, it may cause an illness.

2. His Physical Posture At Meals

God's Messenger ﷺ ate his meals in sitting position, and rarely was he seen eating standing up. He sat on the floor leaning on one foot and sitting on the other, or he would sit cross legged, without using pillows for comfort, or stretching out while eating. He used to say: "I sit like a servant of God Almighty, and I eat like a servant of God Almighty." He also forbade a man to eat while laying on his stomach. (*Reported in Sunan Ibn Mãja*)

Eating while reclining on one side obstructs food passages, overburdens the organs, hinders the natural passing of food through the digestive tract, and effects the speed and naturalness of processing

[1] Also see Dietary planning.

food in the body. The other kind of laying down while eating is the reclining of tyrants when they sit on puffed cushions, rest their arm on a bolster, and leisurely stretch their hand to a raised table. Such sitting position at meals is certainly a gesture of arrogance and ingratitude to one's Lord. That is why God's Messenger ﷺ said: "I sit like a servant, and I eat like a servant." Sometimes, he knelt down to eat, placing the bottom of his left foot under his right foot as a show of gratitude and humility before his Lord, and in respect for the food and its Provider. In this sitting posture, the organs hold to their natural posture, the way God Almighty intended for them, and the digestive process progresses naturally. On the other hand, eating while sitting properly, and without bending over the food prevents pressure from building on the diaphragm separating the chest cavity and the abdominal cavity, which otherwise causes indigestion (*ullem*), thus eliminating any possible pain (*odynophagia*) associated with constipation, or a hampered digestive process. Finally, sitting in the correct and proper posture while eating displays an attitude of decency and proper etiquette.

3. Eating With His Fingers

God's Messenger ﷺ used his three fingers to eat, and he did not use a spoon or a fork. This is a natural way to enjoy food. Even the stomach enjoys such a natural way of eating, whereby the whole body joins in satisfying its need. It is our experience that by eating with tableware, it takes more food to satisfy one's hunger, causing indigestion, and it feels like taking a pills rather than food. Thus, effecting the tradition of taking one third food, one third water, and one third air. Furthermore, to benefit naturally from the nutrients provided in one's meals, one also must take pleasure in eating. However, eating with five fingers may be the cause of satiation, while pushing large quantities of food can clog food passages, and perhaps block the air passage, and that could culminate in death. Still, gorging one's mouth to repletion forfeits the pleasure of eating and takes away the sense of wholesomeness and taste.

4. Mixing Food[1]

God's Messenger ﷺ did not mix food, and he did not eat alone. He did not eat fish and yogurt together, or drink milk with fish, and he did not eat anything sour with it or immediately after

[1] Also see Dietary planning.

it. In fact, he never mixed in the same meal two hot foods, or two cold foods, and he never combined in any two dishes two viscous, costive, copragogue, diarrheic, pyknotic, or containing flaccid substances. Also, he did not eat any two dishes that dissolve as one upon eating, or clot apart in the stomach, and he did not combine a aperient dish with a costive dish, or a slow-digesting food with a fast-digesting one. Furthermore, he did not mix broiled and cooked food, or dry and fresh food, and he did not eat eggs with milk, or meat and milk, or hot food that has just come off the fire, or leftover food that was reheated, nor did he eat spoiled food, pickles, or food high in salt content.

In fact, combining any of the above categories of food may be harmful and can cause abscesses, hematolysis, or hepatitis among other illnesses, and they can drive the digestive system out of balance. Otherwise, and when possible, God's Messenger ﷺ balanced hot food with a little cold food to break its pungency, as he did when he ate fresh dates with cucumbers. He also ate dried dates with purified butter (Arb. *heess*), and he liked to drink extracts of dried dates soaked in water. This infusion prevents hydatid, or cystic build up that can develop in the tissues and liver, and which is sometimes caused by eating rich food.

God's Messenger ﷺ always insisted on having dinner, even if it were a handful of dried dates, and he used to say: "Neglecting dinner accelerates the aging process" (*Reported by Imam al-Tirmithi*). Abu Na'īm narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ insisted on not going to sleep immediately after dinner, and he used to say: "Going to bed on a full stomach hardens one's heart" (*Reported by Imam Ibn Māja*). That is why knowledgeable physicians advise people to have a walk after dinner, even for as little as one hundred steps, and they suggest that sleeping on a full stomach is harmful. As for Muslim physicians, they advise either walking a few steps after dinner, or performing supererogatory (*nafl*) prayers before going to bed. This will help the food to settle in the stomach and the digestive process to ripen fully.

God's Messenger ﷺ also did not drink anything while eating, or after finishing his meal for half an hour at least, and particularly hot drinks or cold water, otherwise, the digestive process would be enfeebled, and could cause the food to spoil in the stomach. He also did not drink water when exhausted, after engaging in recreational exercise, after sexual intercourse, after a hot bath, or when suddenly waking up in the middle of his sleep, or after eating fruits, except after eating certain kinds of fruit when water

can ease their digestion. All of these are accumulated habits that become second nature, and God willing, can be overcome gradually.

5. His Drinks (Honey)

God's Messenger ﷺ often liked to drink cold water sweetened with honey. Natural honey is the best of all nutritive sweeteners. Honey contains detergent and tonic properties, and it opens obstructions in the liver, kidney and bladder. Taking a spoonful of honey in the morning helps dissolve phlegm, gently warms up the stomach, strengthens it, washes away stomach viscidity and eliminates its sluggishness, helps evacuation, expels dampness, and increases one's appetite. Honey is the best of sweeteners for the stomach. Its only harm is that it affects the bile, and vinegar can eliminate such harm, balance it, and bring out honey's full benefits.

Drinking an infusion of honey in the morning is healthier than most drinks that are sweetened with sugar, and is certainly better than artificially sweetened drinks. Sugar-sweetened drinks yield more harm than benefit. A cold drink of honey strengthens the body, preserves its youth, as well as refreshes the spirit, stimulates the liver, and finally, honey stimulates the heart, and provides it with much needed energy and balance. When the heart is healthy, the vessels pump the blood easily, and the arteries carry the blood that is rich in nutrients to all parts of the body. As for the health benefits of drinking cold water, it cools the body, helps maintain its natural level of moisture, regulates body temperature, helps dissolve substances and is critical in the process of digestion. Water also provides the body with needed oxygen and minerals, reduces possible stone formation, and plays a major role in virtually every function of the body. God Almighty says: ﴾ We made water essential for every life. ﴿ (*Qur'an 21:30*) Hence, since water is the cardinal element of life, God's Messenger ﷺ sometimes liked drinking it cold, and sometimes he liked his drink sweetened with honey, dates, or raisins which are some of the best nutrients that enter the human body. On the other hand, tepid or lukewarm water is hard to swallow, can cause abdominal bloating, and bring about the opposite of what fresh cool water does.

We also learn from the prophetic traditions that water stored overnight to cool in a waterskin is even more wholesome than even freshly drawn water from a well. This was learned when God's Messenger ﷺ visited the date-plantation of Abi'l Haytham bin Tayhãn, and asked him: "Do you have some water stored overnight in a waterskin? Otherwise, we will drink from the regular drinking

trough." Abi'l Haytham obliged. (*Reported In sahih Bukhāri*). The difference between water stored overnight and freshly drawn water is like that between leavened dough and unleavened one. Moreover, storing water allows for the sedimentation of unwanted deposits. 'Aisha, God be pleased with her, noted that God's Messenger ﷺ also liked to drink overflowing water from an underground waterwell rather than stagnant water. On the other hand, water kept in a waterskin (Arb. *shinna*)[1] and particularly in untanned ones[2] is more pleasant tasting than water which is kept in an earthenware pot, a ceramic jar, or a glass pitcher among others. Still, water kept overnight in an untanned waterskin is also gentler to the stomach because of its filtration and transudation through the open pores. This is also true regarding water which is kept in natural earthenware pots which also act as a cooler versus those glazed after being baked.

May God's peace and blessings eternally shower upon him, for he is the most perfect of human beings, the bearer of the purest of souls, and the most guided whose breath is most noble, for each one of his actions carries the best of guidance for the believers, and brings forth the most rewarding benefits for their hearts, health, and advantages in this world in the hereafter. 'Aisha, God be pleased with her, also said that God's Messenger ﷺ liked sweetened cold drinks. Besides the abovementioned drinks sweetened with honey, dates, or raisins, this also could mean natural spring water as well as fresh soft water from waterwells.

In another prophetic tradition, God's Messenger ﷺ enjoined upon his companions not to drink water by lapping it with the tongue from a pond while laying on their stomach, or to drink with one's hand, or to drink water from an unknown container in the dark unless first examined. Also, he mostly drank while sitting rather than standing up except when he was offered to drink from the well of Zamzam at the sacred Mosque in Mecca. Drinking while standing up does not give full satisfaction, and drinking hurriedly or greedily can cause breathing difficulties as well as affect the digestive process.

Anas Ibn Mālik narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ used to drink in three stages, breathe in between them, and he used to say: "This is more thirst-quenching, more palatable, and healthier" (*Reported in sahih Muslim*). Breathing between each sip is done outside the drinking cup of course. Drinking in three stages also helps to gradually abate stomach temperature and is healthier

[1] Arb. Asqiyatul adam..

than quickly cooling it in one swallow. Gulping a cold drink in hot weather also can cause one to choke and affect respiration by the contraction of the windpipe and the sudden change of its temperature from normal to cold. Moreover, drinking hurriedly also can affect the regular functions of the heart and the liver. 'Abdullāh bin al-Mubārak narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Drink your water by sipping it and not by gulping it, for gulping it will affect the liver." He also said: "Do not gulp your water in one swallow like cattle, rather drink it in two or three stages. Invoke God's Name[1] before you drink, and thank Him when you finish drinking."[2] Imam Ahmad, God bless his soul, used to say: "The perfect meal must have four elements: It should commence in God's Name, finish with gratitude to Him, have as many hands as possible to share it, and be offered in a large serving pot."

God's Messenger ﷺ also liked drinking wholesome plain milk, and sometimes drank it fermented as yogurt diluted in water. Both drinks cool the body, satiate the liver, and provide essential health benefits for one's body. Milk is also most healthy when the herd feeds on common lavender, Achillea, musk milfoil,[3] or some varieties of wormwood plants among others. It is reported in the collection of correct prophetic traditions (*Jāmi'*) of Imam al-Tirmithi that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "When you finish eating, say: 'Lord, bless our meal and give us a better one,' and when you drink milk say: 'Lord, bless our drink and increase our share of it,' for there is no food or drink that is healthier or more wholesome than milk."

God's Messenger ﷺ sometimes covered a yogurt drink and kept it overnight (Arb. *nabatha*)[4] for the whey to separate before he drank some of it in the morning, and this aids its fermentation and helps modify intestinal bacteria. He would drink of it three times a day for a couple of days and share the leftover with his companions, otherwise he would ask someone to discard it before it turns. Sometimes he also ate a couple of fresh dates with this drink to sweeten it.

6. His Clothing

God's Messenger's dress traditions provide the best of guidance and a perfect example in their simplicity, ease, practicality, and

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[1] i.e., Invoke God's Name by saying: "*Bismillāh*" (In the Name of God)

[2] i.e., Thank Him by saying: "*Al-Hamdu Lillāh*" (All praises be to God)

[3] Cf. Swiss genepi

[4] Arb. *vt. Nabatha* > discarded; or left for a while; or kept to ferment; *n. nabīth*> left to sour; alcoholized.

health benefits. God's Messenger ﷺ sometimes wore an outer cloak over a loose garment, though he mostly wore a loin cloth (a toga or a wrapper; Arb. *izãr*) around his waste, which extended down to above his ankles. He also liked to wear a long shirt (*qamïṣ*) with sleeves of moderate length covering short of his wrists. He wore his shirt over his wrapper and it extended down to his thighs. God's Messenger ﷺ also wore a medium-sized turban to protect his head from hot and cold weather. He simply wound his turban in folds about the head, drew the ends and tucked them snugly under the earlobe. In the city, he wore light shoes that did not cover his ankles, and sometimes he wore light short boots during travels. His preferred color was white and sometimes he wore an untanned cloak made of camel's hair, and he did not wear a black or a red, a dyed, or a glossy outfit. Only once was he seen wearing a black turban, or a green garment, and only once was he seen wearing a reddish-black Yemenite attire.

7. His Home

Since God's Messenger ﷺ recognized that this life is a temporary one, that the journey in this world will eventually reach its intended destination, and that the abode of the hereafter is the permanent one, he and his blessed companions gave little attention to details concerning reconstruction, restoration, renovation, and expansion of their homes, or to building imposing structures. They mostly considered their homes as temporary shelters, and they were similar to travellers' lodging houses. Their homes were intended to protect them from cold and heat, to give them privacy, and to fence them against the intrusion of domestic animals. The believers mostly cared for a roof over their head, and any restorations they did to their homes were structural and necessary at the time. The Medinites' homes were simple, practical, well ventilated, and they were free and distant from any contaminated lands. God's Messenger ﷺ liked perfume, and his house was most fragrant. Entering it was most pleasing to one's heart and soul, for therein lived the most blessed and most exalted of God's creation, and as the seal of God's messengers, to him came the divine revelation to guide humanity out of darkness into light.

8. His Rest

In observing his resting habits and his wakefulness, one learns some of the best, the most balanced, and the healthiest practices. After offering his night (*'ishã*) prayers, God's Messenger ﷺ used to retire in the early part of the night to wake up later on at the

beginning of the second half of the night. Upon waking up, he was particularly ceremonial about cleaning his teeth with a *miswāk*[1] before taking his ablution for prayers. God's Messenger ﷺ would then pray at home until he heard the first call to prayer before he walked to the mosque and led the believers in the congregational dawn (*fajr*) prayers. His rest was most balanced and sufficient for the body to collect its energies and vitality before giving its share of blessings by bringing it to stand before its Lord and bow to Him. After dawn, if he felt a little tired, he then allowed an interval of short rest, lying on his right side, and invoking God's attributes until he was overcome by a short nap. God's Messenger ﷺ never slept on a full stomach. He never allowed for a raised bed, and he usually slept on a floor mattress filled with tufts of palm fibers, and he used a pillow of the same filling, and sometimes, he laid his head on his right hand.

9. Nature of Sleeping

There are two kinds of sleep: (1) beneficial sleep; and (2) harmful sleep. Beneficial sleep restores one's adaptive capacity, while exertion and lack of sleep causes chemical changes in the body and may effect lethargy and hallucination. Sleeping is necessary for the body. During sleep, the basal metabolic rate and body temperature drop and allow the body to rebuild its needed chemical balance, restore any chemical deficit, and to regain its control upon waking up.

Hence the body needs rest, and there are two kinds of it: (1) natural rest; and (2) unnatural rest. As for the natural rest, it involves the deactivation of the natural human forces, including the senses, and control of body movements. During wakefulness, body moisture and vapors dissolve and burn up due to physical movement and exercise. Once such forces cease their activities by relaxing, body moisture and vapor rise to the brain, which is the source and motor behind every movement. Consequently, one will fall asleep. As for the unnatural rest, it is usually due to an illness or a weakness. In this case, body moisture will increase, obstruct normal brain activities, and cause dolefulness, loss of vitality, and excess sleeping. Hence, even mere wakefulness cannot burn up the excess moisture and vapors in the brain. A similar condition of fatigue occurs upon overconsumption of food, whereby heat rises in the stomach during coction, and when the digestive enzymes cannot break down the polysaccharides into their constituent

[1] Miswāk: Dittender wood > (S. *Lepidium*); also a short wooden stick made of *Salvadora Indiea* tree and has a bitter taste. Nowadays is found as toothpaste.

monosaccharides, and when they enter the blood and are transported to the brain, such excess sucrose can cause disturbance in brain function, obesity, depression, even to the point of coma. Obesity also can cause elevation of blood fat, and can increase cardiovascular risks. Therefore, excess sleep is not natural.

However, sleep is needed to provide two essential benefits for the body: (1) by relaxing, the body regains its strength, energy, and the natural physical range of normal functions that will otherwise be difficult to control; and (2) sleeping helps every organ to dispose of its waste products. In fact, during one's sleep, enzymes, intestinal juices, gastric juices, bile salts, and pancreatic juices flow more easily, and particularly when the brain ceases to conduct the normal functions of wakefulness. The concentration of such natural process in the stomach is noticed by the dropping of body temperature, and the lowering of the basal metabolic rate. This is why one feels the need to be covered when resting.

Moreover, the stomach tilts slightly downward towards the small intestines, and to ease the process of digestion, it is healthier to sleep on the right side. On the other hand, sleeping regularly on the left side can disadvantage the heart, because it will throw pressure from the other organs upon it, while it is unhealthy to regularly sleep on the back. However, it will cause no harm to rest on it without sleeping. Finally, sleeping on one's stomach is most damaging to one's health. On this subject, it was narrated by Abi Umãma that God's Messenger ﷺ saw a man sleeping on his stomach in the mosque. He woke him up and reprimanded him by saying: "This is the lying down posture of the dwellers of hell-fire!" (*Reported in Sunan Ibn Mãja*). Sleeping on the stomach without a good reason does not look natural, and it also could represent mental confusion. However, if one does sleep on his stomach because of stomach pain, this may not be as damaging as long as it does not become a habit.

A balanced rest helps the body regain its strength, refreshes one's spirit, and brings out one's adaptive capacity to its fullness, and by compensating for one's energies, sleep will achieve coherence and prevent slackness of one's spirit. Sleeping during the daytime can breed rheumatic diseases, cause deficiency in the color of one's skin, cause inflammation of the spleen (*splenitis*), weaken the nervous system (*neurasthenia*), and weaken sexual desire except for sleeping in summertime during midday heat. The worst of daytime sleeping is to sleep during the early hours of the day, and even worse than that is sleeping in the mid-afternoon during

the latter hours of the day and before sunset. 'Abdullãh bin 'Abbãss once found one of his sons sleeping late in the morning, and he woke him up saying: "Wake up! Why would you sleep during the hour when people's earnings are being apportioned?" Some of our predecessors also said that daytime sleeping is of three kinds: (1) natural; (2) agonizing; and (3) idiotic. As for the natural, it represent God's Messenger's occasional short nap in the early morning. The second kind is to sleep late in the morning, hence depriving one from the benefits of this world and the next. Sleeping late in the morning also may cause one to inherit general body weakness and malaise. Finally, the third kind is to sleep in the mid-afternoon and before sunset, and that may cause dullwittedness.

There is another disadvantage and health hazard associated with late morning sleep, and except for being bedridden, sleeping in the mid-morning causes the putrefaction and foulness of body wastes which are otherwise discarded due to body movement and exercise in the morning. Such putrefaction can cause damage to tissues and the breakup of some internal vessels. Otherwise, and without eliminating waste matters from the bowels and engaging the stomach with a light breakfast, and should it develop into habit, this could become the cause of various incurable diseases.

On the other hand, sleeping regularly under the sun can cause cancerous growths and affect the epithelial cells besides causing other hidden diseases. Sleeping in partial sun and partial shade is also unhealthy. Even merely sitting partly in the sunlight and partly in the shade is bad for one's health. This is noted in God's Messenger's saying: "If you are sitting in the shade and the shadow recedes partly by the sunlight, then move to another place" (*Reported in Sunan Ibn Mãja*). This is another indication that one should not sleep in the sun, or even partly in the sun.

10. Prayers Before Retiring To Bed

It is reported in sa<u>h</u>ĩ<u>h</u> Bu<u>kh</u>ãri that God's Messenger ﷺ said to al-Barã' bin 'Ãzib: "Before you retire to bed, take your ablution as if you were going to perform your regular prayers, lie down on your right side and say: 'Lord, I submit myself to You, put my soul in Your hand, turn my face to You, trust my destiny to You, put my trust in Your protection, soliciting You, and fearing You. I have no escape from You but to seek refuge in You. I believe in Your revealed Book and the Prophet You sent.' Make these the last words you say for that night. Should it be your destiny to die that night, you would have died as a believer."

11. Sleeping On The Right Side

'Aisha, God be pleased with her, said: "After offering the first two traditional (*Sunna*) morning prayers at home, God's Messenger ﷺ did sometimes lie down on his right side for a brief rest[1] before he joined the congregation (to lead them) in the dawn (*fajr*) prayers (at the mosque)." (*Reported in sahīh Bukhāri*). Someone said that the wisdom behind the idea of sleeping on the right side is to make one's sleep light, for the heart leans towards its natural constitution on the upper left side of the body, and by sleeping on the right side, the heart will keep requiring a physical adjustment, hence making one's sleep light. By contrast, sleeping on the left side is conducive to sound sleep, and possibly the consequent neglect of one's duties in this world, and since sleep is the little brother of death, therefore, it must not become constant. Since the dwellers of the heavenly paradise do not sleep, hence, in this world, and during his rest, the human being needs a guardian to protect him against the incursion of diseases, and to defend his body against unwarranted misfortunes, and since his guardian Lord has taken it upon Himself to provide for such protection, God's Messenger ﷺ taught the believers the prayer of entrustment, seeking refuge, solicitation, and reverence to ascertain and substantiate their faith and surrender to God's will. In the event that one is destined to die that night, making such prayer the last words he speaks will ensure him the death of a believer and the ultimate joy of dwelling in paradise.

Such prophetic guidance is most advantageous for one's heart, body and soul during wakefulness and sleep, and both in this world and in the hereafter. May God's peace and blessings shower upon him eternally, for in his example is the best guidance for the believers.

As for his saying: "Lord, I submit myself to You," it means I surrender myself and existence to You as a slave who recognizes his Master and Owner. Then when he says: "I turn my face to You," it includes one's sincerity in turning himself wholly to his Lord and submitting it to His will and judgement. It also involves one's recognition of his ineffectualness and his dependence on God Almighty for his resources and existence. God Almighty speaks on the subject of turning one's face to his Lord, saying: ﴾ If they[2] argue with you, say: I turn my face towards my Lord, and those who follow me do the same. ﴿ (*Qur'an 3:20*) Here too, God Almighty

[1] Cf. Brief rest > microsleep.
[2] i.e., the disbelievers.

speaks of one's countenance, which is the most noble feature of the human being and the cardinal junction of his senses which elucidate his balance. Hence, this prayer means that Allah is the Lord, Cherisher and Sustainer of the creation, and the true servant intends Him, and offers his deeds to please Him. "I trust my destiny to You" means I beseech Your compassion and mercy, and Your choice is my pleasure. Such reliance upon one's Lord brings the servant to the highest station of worship, and this prayer is most pleasing to his Lord. In fact, this is a rare achievement. Only the most pious of the pious ones can reach such state of absolute trust in His Lord and acceptance of His will. Then comes his prayer: "I put my trust in Your protection," in other words: "I ask You to protect me from behind me" which denotes one's absolute trust and feeling of strength by the presence of his Lord. This state is most pleasing and gratifying to one's heart. In fact, one feels comfortable and at peace when he leans his back against an upright and firm support and he will not be afraid of falling. Moreover, since the heart has two kinds of strength—that is (1) the power of determination, which is based on yearning; and (2) the power of aspiring for deliverance, which is based on awe and reverence, and since the human being is constantly seeking his own benefits and eschewing harm, therefore, he prayed: "Soliciting You, and fearing You." The prayer then emerges to praise God Almighty, saying: "I have no escape from You but to seek refuge in You." Hence, it is He alone Who has the power to save the servant from himself. This is similar to God's Messenger's other prayer: "I seek refuge in Your pleasure regarding Your displeasure, and I seek refuge in Your forgiveness versus Your punishment, and I seek refuge in You from You." Here again, the servant recognizes that only Allah has such power to save him from any predicament, which plight can only come to effect by His will, for both trials and salvation are controlled by Him, and He alone has the power to prevent harm. He says: ❮ If Allah afflicts you with evil, none can remove it but He. ❯ (*Qur'an 6:17*) and He says: ❮ Say: 'Who can protect you from Allah if He intends to disadvantage you? And who can prevent Him from showing you mercy?' ❯ (*Qur'an 33:17*) Lastly, the prayer is concluded by confirming one's faith in Allah, His Book, and His Messenger ﷺ who is the surety of salvation, and of earning God's mercy and blessings in this world and in the hereafter. This is his blessed tradition regarding his personal rest, and even if he had not said: 'I am God's Messenger,' the testimony of his actions and purity would have proven it.

12. His Wakefulness

God's Messenger ﷺ usually woke up at dawn upon hearing the cockcrowing of the rooster. He then praised God Almighty, glorified Him, and exclaimed His holy Name. He then called for His help and mercy. God's Messenger ﷺ then would leave his bed and brush his teeth with a *Miswãk*, take his ablution and stand up for prayers, praising God's work, imploring Him, seeking His help, and fearing His punishment. Hence, what better medicine can one find to preserve a healthy heart, body, soul, and strength in this world and in the hereafter?

13. Physical Fitness And Activities

As for God's Messenger's traditions regarding physical exercises or sports, a keen observer of his daily routines will recognize the best of guidance in this field. In this section, God willing, we will discuss some of the benefits of such necessary activities, for his traditions abound with the subtlety, superiority and finesse, only the life of such an exalted and most perfect of human beings can demonstrate.

The human body requires food and drink, however, not all such matters are digestible, and they do not all become part of the human body. Instead, precipitates of unconverted nutrients may settle as sediments, and since the body cannot dispose of them naturally, with time, their accumulation can cause various illnesses. Initially, such cumulations may manifest as localized congestions before they affect the blood and are transported through the blood stream to accessible parts of the body. Though initially one's condition may manifest in the form of bowel problems, with time, any greater buildup of such sediments becomes more dangerous and manifests as localized illnesses that may spread in the body at a later stage. Hence comes the importance of studying the pathology of a disease and the history of its development.

Initially, and due to acknowledging physical malaise and bowel problems, if one accustoms himself to strong purgatives, this may cause greater complications. In fact, most of such drugs are toxic and can interfere with, and eliminate both the good and the bad. Addiction to such drugs can further complicate one's condition because they are hot and interactive, and they can weaken body's natural defense system, create irregular heartbeat, affect the kidney, and develop various disorders and deficiencies. Hence, appropriate regular physical exercise is necessary to refresh the organs, ease the flow of food and nutrients, enhance digestion, and prevent such accumulations.

Furthermore, natural and methodical control of movements and muscular actions lightens the spirit, refreshes the mind, rejuvenates bodily organs, improves one's health, strengthens muscular tonicity, prevents callousness of the joints, strengthens the tendons and ligaments, lessens the possibility of somatic indispositions, and abates most humoral illnesses. This also depends on the level of physical exercises, their balance, moderation, or intensity. The duration and time of such routines also plays an important role in determining their benefits, and all such factors can be of great benefit when combined with other facets of maintaining good health and the epitome of preventive medicine contained in this book. In fact, adhering to the minimum necessary measures and guidelines in this physical fitness program is a must. Such routines must not be carried out on a full stomach, and the food must be completely digested first. The basic level of mild routines is one which refreshes the body, renews its energies, bring a glow to one's face, and quickens vitality and liveliness, while strenuous routines that generate excess sweat are considered immoderate.

In general, routines dedicated to any particular limb strengthen it just like dedicating one's thoughts to a particular subject strengthens one's memory. Hence, each part of the body requires specific routines. The lungs require reading exercises, and their levels begin from reading silently and advance gradually in intensity and loudness. Hearing exercises require careful responsive attention by stimulating the auditory nerves in the ears, and it develops to the point where sound either increases in volume or decreases by distance or by the intensity of its wavelength. Speaking exercises helps oral command; and besides helping recognition by physical and mental vision, eye exercises enhance one's vision, strengthen the ocular muscles, and in some cases can help correct nearsightedness and farsightedness. In contrast, to hiking, normal walking exercises at a moderate pace, riding on horseback, archery, and distance running, besides similar sports, are most healthy for the entire body. Adopting such programs of physical exercises even can cure chronic illnesses such as anemia, infectious diseases, ulcer, and colic, among others.

As for the psychoethical exercises (Arb. *riyāḏatu-n nufūs*), they constitute the training of the mind, enriching the intellect, balancing the conduct, raising the level of ethical standards, and embracing moral excellence, besides other regimes in specific personal fields. These are taught at an early stage of one's life, and include exercises for patience, contentment, gratitude, cheerfulness, joy, love, sharing, courage, benefaction, recognition of good deeds,

forbearance, and courtesy, etcetera. Thus, with perseverance and consistency, and with gradual upgrading of such tutelage, one can become physically, morally, and spiritually strong, and such ethical exercises will manifest and add new strengths. Such are some of the healthy muscles of one's spirit and soul, and God willing, they will help in one's spiritual rising to higher realms, and in the receiving of the divine forgiveness and blessings. Overactivity even in this field, and lacking the proper supervision and devotion of a concerned and learned parent, or the dedication of a qualified teacher also may lay a heavy burden on the person's intellect, where impasse may be detrimental to one's spiritual growth, and only a qualified guidance can break through such impasse. Such training must keep advancing until it develops real character, positive traits, and blessed faculties and talents.

When the reader contemplates the aforementioned exercises, which are demonstrated in the personal example and pursuit of God's Messenger ﷺ, God willing, he will recognize the excellence, uniqueness, and integrity of such virtuous exercises in health preservation, in preventing common diseases, and in benefiting one's livelihood and interests in this world and in the hereafter. Furthermore, the reader will surely recognize the benefits of performing the daily five-times prayer (*ṣalāt*), and its role in the preservation of a healthy faith, certitude, and determination. The prayers of the second half of the night known as *tahajjud* also provide immense health benefits and refresh one's mind, body, heart, and soul, as they ensure one's continuing happiness in this world, and his infinite joy in the hereafter.

It is reported in the two collections of prophetic traditions,[1] that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "When you go to bed, Satan comes from behind and ties three knots over your vertex. Over each knot he recites an evil spell, saying: 'Sleep a long and slumberous night!' When you wake up, if you commence by invoking God's Name, the first knot will breakup; if you leave your bed to take an ablution, the second knot will breakup; and when you stand up in prayers, the third knot will breakup. Upon breakingup Satan's spell, one will feel energetic and in good spirits, otherwise, he will feel exhaustion and malice."

In fact, all the religious functions of prayers, fasting, and pilgrimage among others, share complete physical, ethical, and spiritual benefits, and together, they constitute the bare minimum exercises needed for the preservation of one's health and fitness.

[1] Bukhāri and Muslim.

They also include common sports, daily functions such as visiting the sick, serving one's community, walking in a funeral procession, walking to the mosque, bathing, hiking, equitation, and joining study circles among others. In essence, when any of such exercises is dedicated to God's pleasure, it conquers evil and brings benefits in this world and in the hereafter. Such are the basic benefits one can realize in pursuing the traditions of God's Messenger ﷺ, imbibing his qualities, and by understanding that his example is the best for one's guidance and success.

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3
Excretion Through Coitus

The sexual aspect of life has three basic purposes: 1) conservation of the human race, and continuity of its kind until it reaches the total number of human beings intended by God's leave to experience life in this world, to fulfill the divine purpose, and to show gratitude to its Creator; 2) ejection of semen from the body, otherwise, suppression or retention of congested semen can cause various kinds of serious illnesses; and 3) fulfillment of one's desire, satisfaction of his sexual pleasure, and enjoyment of this blessing. The latter is the only pleasure of such intercourse which is also provided in the heavenly paradise, whereby, therein there is neither ejaculation of semen, natural discharge of overcongested semen, nor reproduction.

Learned physicians find that sexual intercourse yields essential health benefits. Galen attributes semen to the elements of fire and air, and describes its humors as hot and moist. This is because semen is rich in prostaglandins, which are hormonelike fatty acids found throughout the body and particularly in semen. Prostaglandins are primary nutrients that affect essential body processes, including blood pressure, metabolism, and body temperature among others. Hence, understanding the value of this most unmitigated and purest form of blood and its preciousness requires great consideration in discharging it. This means to wisely value the reasons behind dispensing of this precious water of life for either conceiving a child, or emitting it through lawful sexual intercourse upon congestion. In fact, congested semen which are retained for an extended period can cause various illnesses and infirmities, including obsession, hebetude, lunacy, and even insanity, and sometimes, engaging in lawful sexual intercourse may aid in the recovery

from such illnesses. On the other hand, congestion and prevalence of semen for an extended period can cause its corruption, and turns it into a harmful toxin that the body cannot easily dispose of. However, sometimes, nature produces a spontaneous and involuntary emission of excess semen, usually during sleep, and without sexual intercourse.

Some learned predecessors have concluded that the human being should pledge: 1) to walk at least a certain minimum distance every day; 2) to feed his stomach at regular intervals, and not to extend fasting from food beyond the religious requirement; and 3) not to abstain from having lawful sexual intercourse, for a water well drains out if its water is not used regularly. Imam Muhammad ibn Zakariyya once said: "Abstaining from sexual intercourse for an extended period weakens one's nervous system, can cause obstruction of the urethra, and shrinks the penis." He added when he observed some people who vowed temporary abstention from sexual intercourse, that their sexual energy diminished, they suffered general weakness of their bodies, became doleful, lost their desire, and their digestive system became corrupt.

Other benefits of lawful sexual intercourse include protecting one's eyes from looking at what is unlawful, preserving one's chastity, controlling one's desire and lust against what is unlawful, and providing the same for his wife. This will certainly provide the believing man and believing woman with innumerable benefits in this world and in the hereafter. Imam Ahmad alluding to abstention from sex, once said: "I exercise patience when fasting from food and drink, though it is still difficult." He also reported in his collection of correct prophetic traditions that God's Messenger ﷺ encouraged the believers to get married, saying: "Get married, and conceive many children for I shall take pride in your number on the day of judgement." Ibn 'Abbãss narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "I get married, eat meat, sleep, stand up in night prayers, fast, and break my fast. Whoever disdains from my traditions (*Sunna*) is not one of my followers." He also said: "O young men, whoever among you has the means to establish a family, he should get married, for marriage preserves the chastity of one's eyes and sexual organ, and whoever cannot afford to establish a family, he must fast from desiring sex, for abstention in that case will protect him from sin."

It is also reported that when Jãbir married a widowed woman, God's Messenger ﷺ said to him: "Why don't you marry a young virgin whom you caress and who will caress you?"

Ibn 'Abbãss once said: "We recognize that marriage is the best solution for two people who are in love."

Ibn 'Abbãss, God be pleased with him and with his father, narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "The world is a field of temporary pleasures, and the best of worldly enjoyments is a pious and chaste wife" (*Reported in sahih Muslim*). God's Messenger ﷺ also encouraged his followers to choose virginity, beauty, and piety in a wife.

Abu Huraira narrated that someone asked God's Messenger ﷺ: "Who is the best of wives?" He replied: "A woman who pleases her husband when he looks at her, who fulfills his wishes when he asks her, and who does not engage in what he dislikes concerning herself or his property" (*Narrated in sunan An-Nisã'i*).

It is also narrated in the two collections of correct prophetic traditions that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "A man solicits a woman in marriage for four reasons: her wealth, her family's rank, her beauty, or her piety. Choose the pious one, and you will have gained true wealth."

God's Messenger ﷺ also encouraged people to choose the young and fertile. On this subject, Mu'qal bin Yasãr related that a man said to God's Messenger ﷺ: "I found a beautiful woman from a noble family but she cannot bear children, should I marry her?" God's Messenger ﷺ replied: "Nay." The man came back and asked again, and he received the same reply. When the man returned a third time and asked the same question, God's Messenger ﷺ turned to his companions and said: "Choose in your wives the fertile and the affectionate, for I shall take pride in your number on the day of judgement."

Imam al-Tirmithi narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "It is among the traditions of God's Messengers to marry, to brush their teeth, to anoint themselves with perfume, and to be circumcised."

Prior to engaging in sexual intercourse, it is necessary for the husband to express his affection and love for his wife by touching her, caressing her, kissing her, and sometimes sucking her tongue. Jãbir bin 'Abdullãh narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ enjoined upon a man not to engage in sexual intercourse before caressing his wife. It is also a prophetic tradition to take a complete ritual ablution (*ghusul*) after engaging in sexual intercourse and before retiring to sleep, and at least, to take a ritual ablution (*wudü'*), should the man desire to reengage in sexual intercourse anew. Upon climax, the innate heat transfuses throughout the entire body, and by taking a complete ritual ablution, the water refreshes

one's spirit, and ensures cleanliness and ritual purity. It also rejuvenates the body's innate heat, musters its caloricity, and helps the gametogenous process. Almighty Allah says: ❮ We created the human being from a sperm which is produced by a gametogenic[1] process...❯ (*Qur'an 76:2*)

3.1 Sexual Conduct

It is healthier to have sexual intercourse after a complete digestion and when body's temperament is stable, resulting in the balance of its heat and cold, dryness and moisture, or stomach's fullness and emptiness. On the other hand, it is less harmful to have sexual intercourse while the stomach is full rather than when it is empty. Similarly, its harm is less with excess body moisture versus its dryness, and with higher body temperature versus colder one. Under normal circumstances, one should approach his wife when his desire and urge for sex has grown naturally, and when he feels sexual and fully stimulated. One should not arouse the feeling of passion by focusing on prurient thoughts, lustful and erotic ideas, persistence in looking at what is unlawful, fixing his gaze at images expressing gross sensuality and lecherousness, and one should not impel himself to engage in sex without prevalent desire or need for it. Instead, he should engage in sexual intercourse when he is seized by voluptuous agitation, and driven by the natural buildup of excess semen, and when moved by his carnal nature.

It is better for a young man to avoid sexual intercourse with an old woman, or with a sick woman, and it is better to avoid having sexual intercourse with a young girl who is immature, or who does not have sexual urge. Sexual intercourse with any of the above weakens one's sexual appetite, renders him regularly unsatisfied, and deprives him of strength, spirit, and vigor. Some physicians claim that sexual intercourse with a non-virgin yields more sexual satisfaction than that of engaging in it with a virgin. Of course this is an ill-judgment, and carries no moral or religious weight. On the other hand, nature and ethical religious norms encourage marriage to a virgin girl because of the particular attachment and love she will develop towards her husband, her fertility, her undivided attention, and the absence of comparison in her mind between him and an earlier husband. It is in this sense that God's Messenger ﷺ said to Jãbir: "Why don't you marry

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[1] Arb. *Amshãj* > (E) gametogenesis, the process of consecutive cell divisions and differentiation.

a young virgin whom you caress and who will caress you." Moreover, the magnificent Allah revealed that He created for the believers paradisiacal maiden wives, who are ‹ chaste, restraining their glances, and whom no men or jinn have touched before them› (*Qur'an 55:56*),, and He says: ‹ Chaste virgins[1] in (goodly) pavilions› (*Qur'an 55:72*).

Also on this subject, 'Aisha, God be please with her, once said to God's Messenger ﷺ: "You see—if you come by a tree under which someone has reveled earlier and indulged freely, then nearby, you see another tree, where the pasture surrounding it is still intact; under which tree will you rest and let your camel graze?" God's Messenger ﷺ replied: "The unmarred one." In this, 'Aisha, the blessed mother of the believers, wanted to express her absolute, peerless, and unparalleled love for him, and also meant that she was the only virgin he married, while the other spouses were previously married.

When sexual intercourse is coupled with love, it brings more unity between the husband and the wife, heightens pleasure, lessens body fatigue, and maximizes emission of semen during coition. On the other hand, when the husband lacks love or interest, or when he beholds no beauty in his wife, then sexual intercourse will weaken the body, reduce man's ability to have erection, and minimize the emission of semen during coition.

To have sexual intercourse with a menstruating woman is religiously forbidden, unsafe, and is extremely damaging to one's health, and all physicians warrant against it.

The best and most fitting posture for sexual intercourse between human beings is for the husband to lie on top of his wife after duly caressing her and kissing her. Almighty Allah says: ‹ They are a comfort to you and you are to them › (*Qur'an 2:187*). The believing man protects his chastity and finds his satisfaction and comfort in his believing wife, and he is her comforter as well. Hence, this most fitting and noble posture for sexual intercourse is understood from this Qur'anic verse. In this sense, the use of the word comforter (Arb. *libãs*; E. *blanket*) is most suitable, though the verse may also mean that during the sacrament of marriage, the wife also may reciprocate, sympathize with her husband, and lean on him to be his comforter as well. This is a veritable sacred matrimony.

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[1] Arb. Ḫūr> chaste, sylphlike, nymphean, nubile.

The most unnatural and disconsolate posture during sexual intercourse is for the husband to lie on his back, and for the wife to lie on top of him. This is not the natural way intended for mating among birds, or the copulation in animal husbandry, and still, not even for the sexual intercourse among other creations. Hence, it looks abnormal during sexual intercourse for the human beings to adopt sensually erotic postures, among other unrestrained, aphrodisiac, and erogenous sexual techniques that insult the human dignity, and degrade his humanness to below those of animals or even sea creatures. Perhaps one who believes in GodAlmighty will understand what is meant herein.

Furthermore, when the man lies on his back during sexual intercourse, this posture will obstruct the complete ejaculation of semen, and a portion of his semen will remain in the body to vitiate and putrefy. Consequently, such putrefactive microorganisms, which the body cannot dispose of except through coition, will deposit in the blood, effecting toxicity and developing into other diseases that may surface later. Another danger to man's health that can be caused by abnormal sexual behavior is the development of infectious venereal diseases that can be caused by the possible flow of gonococcus fluids from the woman's vagina into man's urethra, and which can also cause a chronic inflammation of the urethra.

Another important area of consideration herein is the original purpose of insemination for gestation and the preservation of the human race, whereby, improper delivering of the male sperm into the female vagina will prevent pregnancy. In other words, even if a lucky sperm is able to reach the uterus through the cervix, and then fertilize an egg in the fallopian tube, then and if the egg is attached incorrectly to the lining of the uterus, it will not develop into an embryo, and it will definitely not result in conception. Hence, the woman should act as a receiver not as an extractor, and the male must act as donor not as a milldam. Therefore, it is against the natural way to conceptualize emotions and to culture sexual techniques that will bear no fruit. The divine laws instituted by our Creator provide clear guidance, and in minute detail, for every aspect of our lives during our journey in this world.

Prior to the coming of God's Messenger ﷺ and the finalization of the accepted religious dictates concerning permissible sexual intercourse, among the people of the book, some used to perform sex while lying on their sides, though correctly joining the male

and female sexual organs, and they believed that such posture is easier and more gratifying for the woman. Sometimes, others required their wives to position their body face down during sexual intercourse, and again, respecting the natural predisposition of the male and the female sexual organs. Jãbir, God be pleased with him, reported that in his time, the Jews of Medina believed that if the husband inserted his penis into his wife's vagina correctly while the wife inclines face down, bending and resting on her knees and elbows, and if they conceive a child, the newborn will be cross-eyed. When the Jews argued with some Arabs about such sexual practices, God Almighty revealed the code of marital relations, saying: ❮ Your wives are your tilth, therefore, cultivate your fields as you please ❯ (*Qur'an 2:223*).

Of course, this verse acknowledges the human character and carnality, and together with the balance of moral values and spiritual clarity shown in the person and life of God's Messenger ﷺ the believers may adopt the correct sexual behavior. In a commentary on this verse, Imam Muslim said: "This could mean that both postures are permissible as long as the man respects the natural predisposition of the male and the female sexual organs." Meaning that the vagina is the only natural field for insemination, cultivation, and impregnation.

As for anal sexual intercourse, this is a promiscuous, most abominable and forbidden sexual behavior, and no prophet has ever assented to its lawfulness. Hence, it is wrongful and impermissible for the husband to engage in anal intercourse with his wife. God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Cursed is he who engages in anal intercourse with a woman." In another narration reported by Imam Ahmad and by Ibn Mãja, he said: "God does not look at a man who engages in anal intercourse with his wife." Also in a narration reported by Imam al-Tirmithi, God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Whoever engages in sexual intercourse with a menstruating woman, or engages in anal intercourse with her, or seeks and believes in the prognostications of a diviner has denied what was revealed to Muhammad" ﷺ. In another narration by al-Baihaqi, he said: "Whoever engages in anal intercourse with a man or a woman is a disbeliever." Then comes another prophetic saying reported in Wakī's collection of prophetic traditions, narrated by 'Abdullãh bin Yazīd that Omar bin al-Khattãb, God be pleased with him, reported of God's Messenger ﷺ saying: "Allah does not shy to speak the truth. Do not approach women from the rectum." In another narration, he is quoted to say: "Do not approach

women from the anus." In yet another narration, upon whom be peace, addressed some people saying: "You must be ashamed of yourselves before God Almighty. Allah does not shy to speak the truth. Do not approach your wives from the rectum." Qatãda narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ said about anal intercourse: "This is quasi-sodomy."

Ibn 'Abbãss narrated that a man from Medina asked God's Messenger ﷺ about the religious view on anal intercourse. He replied: "Make love to your wife as you please as long as you approach her from the vagina." That is: hold each other as you please, as long as your sexual congress respects the natural predisposition of the male and the female sexual organs.

Al-Barã' bin 'Ãzib narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "There are ten kinds of people who deny the Magnificent Allah. They include: 1) The murderer; 2) the sorcerer; 3) the pimp; 4) the amphierotist (i.e., one who has erotic attraction to both the vagina and the anus); 5) the obstructor of the collection and distribution of alms tax; 6) one who dies before performing his pilgrimage, though he has the financial means to do so; 7) the drunkard; 8) the mischief-maker; 9) the arms salesman who benefits from encouraging warlords to fight; and 10) one who has sex with a forbidden woman among his blood relations." Abu Huraira, God be pleased with Him, narrated that prior to God's Messenger ﷺ passing, he delivered a sermon in Medina, in which he admonished the people, and it included: "Whoever engages in anal sexual intercourse with a woman, or another man, or a child, will be gathered on the Day of Resurrection having a stench worse than a decaying cadaver. People will be offended by his mephitic smell until he is thrusted into hell-fire. Allah will devalue his deeds, and no regret will save him then. He will be constrained into a burning coffin fastened with nails of fire." Abu Huraira commented on this saying, adding: "This is the predestined punishment of such a person, unless he repents."

Mujãhid asked Ibn 'Abbãss about the meaning of God Almighty's saying: ❬ Approach them as you were commanded to do by Allah ❭ (*Qur'an 222:2*). He replied: "It means to avoid sexual intercourse with them during their menstrual period" — that is until they renew their state of purity with a complete ritual ablution (Arb. *ghusul*), and only after which *ghusul* a woman is permitted to offer ritual prayers. 'Ali bin 'Talha, further commented: "It means to approach the woman from the vagina and to avoid the rectum." In this sense, the Qur'anic verse referred to both areas of the

permissible and the prohibited sexual congresses: the permissible, that is through the female sexual organ that allows conception, and the prohibited, that is the straight intestine, or the loathsome excretory organ (Arb. *h̲ash*). Therefore, if God Almighty forbade sexual intercourse during woman's menstrual period because of a limited nocuity, then how much more so an abnormal erotic attraction to anal intercourse which involves contact with waste matters from the bowels, impedes the purpose of preserving the human race, and leads to sodomy and pederasty? On the other hand, anal intercourse deprives the woman from her natural sexual rights and does not serve her sexual climax. In other words, the rectum was not created for sexual intercourse, while the vagina is the natural female organ for sexual congress. Whoever defiles the natural function of the excretory organ has adulterated the order and purpose behind the sexes, and he has indeed denied the divine wisdom and laws.

Furthermore, anal intercourse is most harmful and injurious for man's health. Both physicians and psychotherapists know that, and they advise against it. On the other hand, in a correct congress of the sexes, the vagina releases the female sex hormones that prepare the uterus to receive the fertilized egg, and in the vagina, the fallopian tubes attract and aid man's sexual organ to fully release any congested semen. This process results in fully satisfying man's sexual urge and in relieving him from any pressure, while anal intercourse does not release man's semen thoroughly and requires extra physically attenuating efforts because it is unnatural. Woman's health also suffers from anal intercourse because it drives foreign elements into her excretory organ, and affects her humors.

Anal sexual intercourse also causes the woman depression, stress, and aversion to her companion and his unnatural and bestial actions. Such actions also will darken one's face, obfuscate the clarity of his bosom, dim the light of his heart, and cover his face with forlornness, estrangement, and bewilderment that will be recognized easily by anyone with keen judgement and minimal perspicaciousness. Anal intercourse will also cause extreme hatred, consequent separation, and an irreparable breakup between the man and the woman, except as God wills, and when they truly repent and ask for His forgiveness. The unnaturalness of such sexual relationship also will wash away the human being's good nature and replace it with low spirit and contentious qualities in both the man and the woman, leading to constant arguments and fights between them; it will also take love for one another

away from their hearts, and replaces it with hatred, aversion, and damnation. Furthermore, aversion against the divine law will bring about the heavenly curse and replace worldly comforts with hardship, wealth with poverty, and health with unknown diseases. Since God Almighty, their Creator, will not look at them, what good can they expect in this life, and what evil consequences can they escape from? What life can a dependent seek when his Sustainer and Provider despises him, loathes him, curses him, and turns away from him?

Anal intercourse also takes away modesty from one's heart and replaces it with aggressiveness, hostile nature, and belligerence, and such evil qualities beget hardening of the heart, and lead to contention, to courting evil actions, and to considering them natural. That is the law of the jungle. Once the heart is thus corrupted, inverted, and damaged, it becomes irreparable, and it reverses the nature God intended for it — once it departs from the normal to the abnormal, and adheres to an existence of less than that of animal life in this world, causing deterioration of character, superinvolution, and recidivism. All of that will also beget impudence, insolence, boldness, immodesty, and corruption. Such qualities will inherit the person humiliation, ignobility, contempt, degradation, and disdain. People will despise him, loathe him, and belittle him. These are only some of the physically witnessed encounters with such abnormal and forbidden sexual conduct.

Hence, it is most beneficial for those who have intelligence, and who can understand what is being said hereinabove, to accept and follow the guidance of God's Messenger ﷺ whose sole endeavor and purpose in delivering the divine message is to save humanity from an initial and painful destruction, and later on, from eternal punishment and suffering in hell-fire, for his guidance is intended to bring people happiness and peace in this ephemeral world, and eternally in the hereafter.

3.2 The Injurious And Impermissible Sexual Congress

There are two categories of injurious sexual congress: 1) religious; and 2) physical. The first is forbidden by the divine law, and is of several types. Some are more abhorrent, gruesome, and of higher degree of unacceptability than others. Hence, forbidden sexual congress can be either 1) adventitiously prohibited, and is less morbid; or 2) categorically prohibited.

As for the adventitiously prohibited sexual congress, it includes:

a- Having sexual intercourse during the ritual consecration of either the minor or the major pilgrimage to Mecca, where one is required to observe sexual continence while wearing *iḫrãm*;

b- Having sexual intercourse during the fasting hours of the month of Ramadan;

c- Committing sexual offenses during a religious retreat (*i'tikãf*) in the mosque;

d- Having sexual intercourse with a woman during her menstrual period;

e- Having sexual intercourse with a woman after divorcing her, and even without witnesses, or prior to reporting the pronouncement to a religious judge, unless the marriage is correctly reinstated; among other sexual offenses.

As for the categorically prohibited sexual congress, which sin cannot be expiated exclusive of carrying the mandatory divine sentence; it includes:

a- Having forbidden sexual intercourse with a woman among one's blood relations; and this is the most offensive in this category as sanctioned by Imam Ahmad, God be pleased with him, as well as by other Imams;

b- Committing adultery with a woman one can otherwise marry. Hence, both the man and the woman must face the divine punishment;

c- Having sexual intercourse with a married woman who consents to adultery, and in this case, both adulterers must meet the enforcement of the divine right, and satisfaction of the canonical law and legal right of the husband. In the case of rape, the adulterer must settle the woman's right as well. If the woman has relatives, then their feeling of disgrace also must be satisfied; and finally, if she is a blood relation one is forbidden to marry, then the sentence also must give consideration to such transgression upon the law. The sentence of each one of such serious offences must agree with their respective categories.

As for the second category of physically injurious sexual congress, it involves two kinds as well: 1) qualitative sex; and 2) quantitative sex. We already spoke of the qualitative sexual congress, and as for the quantitative sexual congress, it must be understood that

engaging in excessive sex debilitates the strength, damages the nervous system, and can cause chronic muscular tremors, hemiparalysis, spasms, caligation (i.e., weakness of eyesight), abulomania (i.e., loss of ability to exercise willpower accompanied with mental weakness), vasodilation (i.e., dilation of blood vessels making them susceptible to accepting putrid waste, and extinguishing the innate heat).

As we explained earlier, one should not have sexual congress:

1- Before complete digestion;
2- With unbalanced bowels;
3- When feeling hungry, for hunger diminishes the sexual drive and weakens the innate heat;
4- On a full stomach, for that can cause serious illnesses;
5- Immediately after a hot bath;
6- After vomiting;
7- After hearing emotionally disturbing news;
8- When being angry; and
9- Under stress, feeling depressed, mourning someone, or even after hearing exciting news.

On the other hand, the healthiest and best time to engage in sexual congress is a short time after dark, and after a full digestion. Following that, one must take a complete ritual ablution (*ghusul*), or a minor ablution (*wudū'*) before going to sleep, and this will help one recuperate his strength. One also should avoid any kind of physical exercise immediately after sexual congress, for this is most injurious to one's health.

3.3 Treating Amativeness And Attraction To Physical Form

Amativeness (*'ishq*), or sexual obsession, is a kind of sickness of the heart, a disease, though it is different in substance and cause, and it requires particular treatment. Once the person is put at such a disadvantage, he finds himself under constant, irresistible, and compelling influence to engage in sex. Hence, amativeness greatly distresses the patient, and renders the physician helpless.

God Almighty spoke twice in the holy Qur'an of such a destructive disease _ once relating to women's erotic passion, and the second time in relation to the sexual inversion of some mutinous demons among men, and their attraction to homoeroticism and pedophilia.

In the case of women, Almighty Allah spoke of the story of Zulaikha, wife of Egypt's minister, when she felt amative attraction for her adopted servant Joseph, upon whom be peace. As for the case of men, Almighty Allah related the story of the people of Sodom, when they found that God's prophet Lot, peace be upon him, had hosted some alien guests. These were in fact the angels of destruction who were sent to obliterate the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah and their dwellers. A group of sodomitics came and stormed his house aspiring to satisfy their lasciviousness. God's prophet Lot begged the people to leave him and his guests alone, and said: "Do not shame me before my guests. Is there not a single right-minded man among you? Fear ye God, and do not disgrace me." They retorted: "Did we not forbid you to associate with anyone?" He pleaded with them again: "Here are my daughters, take them instead, they are purer for you, if you want to marry them" (*Qur'an. Ch. 15, vs. 67-71*). Almighty Allah then said to His blessed prophet Lot: ❮ By thy life, they shall wander blindly in their dazzlement. Hence, the Cry seized them before sunrise, and We turned their city upside down and rained on it brimstones from hell❯ (*Qur'an 15:70-72*).

Fascination and attraction to physical forms, objects, pictures, statues, idols, books, portraitures, museums, images, arts, nature, beauty, scenery, or obsession and pride about one's own beauty (*callomania*), or self, etcetera, sometimes develop into an abnormal excitability, and is an illness that must be treated as such. These are creations, and fascination with the creation is a mask that obstructs one's recognition of his Creator. A heart that is filled with love for Allah will see life in this world from a different depth. In fact, fascination and attraction to objects and sensuality is a serious illness, and a trial for hearts that are void of substance—hearts that lack love for their Creator; hearts that are disinterested in reality, blinded by illusion, and seek their satisfaction from other than Him, though all are His creation, and are dependent on His provision. On the other hand, when one's heart is filled with true and sincere love for Allah, has constant yearning to stand again before Him, and to revere Him, such resolve and sincerity can overcome and dispel this contagious and destructive disease of fascination, folly, and attraction to the physical form.

When Zulaikha, wife of Egypt's minister [who incidentally was an eunuch], summoned Joseph, peace be upon him, to her chamber, having a preset lascivious and amorous idea in mind, and with her amative sexual obsession about him, she pressured him, and for a moment, Joseph, became attracted to her, and

just prior to any greater involvement, God Almighty manifested His mercy upon Joseph, who immediately recognized right from wrong, truth from falsehood, and the permissible from the forbidden, as he reached out to the door to escape from Zulai<u>kh</u>a's trap. God Almighty spoke of this instance in favor of Joseph, saying: ❮ We wanted to protect him from evil and shameful deeds, for he was one of our sincere and purified servants❯ (*Qur'an 12:24*). In this instance, we learn that sincerity is an important element that will prompt the divine intervention and repellence of the evil consequences of amativeness.

Some of our predecessors defined obsessed love (*'i<u>sh</u>q*) as the "infatuation of an empty heart" — that is, emptiness from anything except its beloved, and it renders the person blind to any thing other than his commanding influence. This imagery is described in the holy Qur'an, when God Almighty spoke of the mother of Moses, when in fear for his safety, and in an emotional move, she had to place the infant in a basket, and let him off the riverbank. God Almighty said: ❮ The heart of the mother of Moses became empty, and she nearly disclosed him had We not bridled her heart❯ (*Qur'an 28:10*). This means that her heart became empty of every thing except Moses because of her intense love for him, and her heart's attachment to her child and fondness for him.

Such intense love (*'i<u>sh</u>q*) is made of two elements: 1) craving for the beloved; and 2) constantly aspiring to be with him to satisfy such craving. If one of these two elements is missing at any time, then there is no love. Many wise and learned people spoke extensively of such love, and in some commentaries, many went off the track. Sometimes they made it visionary and impractical, and at other times, they drove their listeners to despair of it, or even to despise it.

On this subject, we say that in His infinite and unfathomable wisdom, God Almighty created love, and He decreed that it should bring harmony in a reciprocal relationship of creation of similar qualities, conformity, and balance. Each creation must have sexual attraction, admiration, and responsiveness to its own kind, and they must feel tension, aversion, repulsiveness, and no sexual attraction towards other creations. Hence, the secret of blending and merging of creation in the upper realms and the lower ones, the heavens and the earth, is based on congeniality, connaturality, compatibility, similarity, and enrichment of, and complementing of one another. On the other hand, the secret of aversion and separation is incompatibility, dissimilarity, inharmoniousness, incongruousness, and incoherence. All of God's creations are made

like that. Each creation comes together and associates with its own kind. This balance also applies to qualities. People of good qualities associate together, and the opposite is also true. God Almighty says: ❮ It is He Who created you from a single being, and out of that, He created its mate, so that one may lie with the other ❯ (*Qur'an 7:189*). Hence, Almighty Allah made man seek his rest, comfort, and intercourse (Arb. *'asala*)[1] with the woman, because she is of his own kind.

The nature of mating congruity between them is based on love, for woman was made of the like nature, and the core of such peace and tranquility between them is love. This proves that their real satisfaction or *'asala*, is not based on beauty, look, intention, goal, will, character, balance, or spiritual attainment, though such elements also can help to bring about love, peace, and tranquility in their lives.

God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Souls are consecrated soldiers. When they recognize symmetry, they foster mutual affection, and those who demonstrate dissymmetry, hold aversion to one another." In his *masnad*, Imam Ahmad, explaining the circumstance that led to this prophetic saying, noted that a woman from Mecca who was known for her good humor moved to Medina and chose to stay at the house of a Medinite woman who was also known for her good humor. Commenting on that, God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Souls are consecrated soldiers..." etcetera. Hence, the divine law was established to foster reciprocity and justice in both reward and punishment. The divine law also does not segregate analogous elements, and it does not unite incongruous elements. Whoever thinks otherwise, it is either because of his lack of knowledge and proficiency of the divine jurisprudence, or because of his failure to recognize the laws of symmetry and incongruence; otherwise, it may be because of his fostering innovation, falsely attributing it to the divine law, and introducing elements that have no legitimate proof, and which are based on people's hearsay, indulgences, and commonality.

In fact, it is by God's will, His infinite wisdom, unfathomable grace, and divine justice, that His creation comes to the stage of existence; and it is only through the divine justice, the divine law (*Sharī'a*), and the criterion of discerning right from wrong in this life that each creation can breathe peace and tranquility with its own kind. This is the law of shared deservedness and

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[1] 'Asala > Arb. 'asal: honey; sexual pleasure. Hence, the expression honeymoon means making marriage actual by sexual intercourse.

equal treatment of beings according to their substance, kind, and actions. It merges together the compatible and separates the incompatible. It brings together the wholesome and separates the defective. It embraces what is morally correct, and shuns the disgraceful. What is just in this world has its counterpart in the hereafter, and what seems right and correct in this life reflects its analogue in the next life. The righteous, the true, the sincere, and the godly people congregate together in this world, and God willing, they will be brought together in the hereafter. Similarly, the criminals, the unjust ones, the transgressors, and the ungodly ones congregate together in this world, and they will surely be brought together in the hereafter.

Referring to the day of judgement, God Almighty says: ❮ Rally the sinners, their partners, and what they worshiped besides Allah. Lead them in the direction of hell-fire, and make them wait there for questioning first ❯ (*Qur'an 37:22-24*). The Prince and commander of the believers (*Amīr-ul mu'mineen*), Omar bin al-Khattāb, God be pleased with him, said: "Their 'partners' mean: people of the same class." Imam Ahmad, God bless his soul, also interpreted 'partners' as similar. God Almighty also says: ❮ When the souls are sorted out ❯ (*Qur'an 81:7*), meaning being joined, and coupled, like with like. This is likeness in qualities and actions. The godly ones, who love one another in Allah will be gathered in paradise, and the ungodly ones who love one another in demonic and satanic ventures will be gathered in hell-fire. Each one will be gathered with what attracted him in this world, and whether then he likes it or not. It is reported in *sahīh* al-Hākim, among other collections of prophetic sayings, that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Whatever kind of people one loves (or associates with in this world), he will be gathered with them (in the hereafter)."

3.4 Kinds of Love

There are several kinds of love. The best and most reverent is to love one another in Allah. This means to love what Allah loves, and it requires one to love Allah and His Messenger ﷺ. Another kind of love, is to love one another for the sake of a path, a way of life, a religion, a school of thought, or because of kinship, business interest, collegiality, exchanging gifts, or a common goal. Then there is a kind of love that is based on material interest in one's beloved — that is, for honor, association, status, wealth, knowledge, guidance, teachings, or to satisfy a passing desire. This is a casual love, and it ends upon satisfaction. Hence, whoever displays interest in you when soliciting a favor, will surely leave you when it is

done. Furthermore, there is the love of one's own kind — that is, the love which is based on congeniality, connaturality, compatibility, and symmetry. That is the natural and unbreakable bond between a lover and a beloved. No common passing interest can annihilate it or destroy it. Only temporary adverse circumstances can limit its exhibition, or amend its course. The ideal absolute love, which is also known as *'ishq*, is like that. It combines a spiritual liking, and a stable psychological mood. Such love is a state that harbors no suspicion, doubt, lack of trust, enervation, or impatience, etcetera. It has a definite course, and a settled state of the heart.

Physical debilitation and loss of one's health does not occur because of true love. Someone may ask: "If the ideal love is thus described, then how come it does not manifest simultaneously by both people when it is supposed to combine a harmonious spiritual liking, and a stable psychological mood, and instead, one mostly witnesses it happening from one side only?" The answer to this question is that sometimes the person who is the subject of love may react differently when natural and congruous conditions are not met, or perhaps the recipient may have a delayed reaction because of needed adjustment, or because of imposing adverse circumstances. On the other hand, the lack of love for the first party may be because of three reasons: 1) a clear defect in the purpose of the proposed love, qualifying it as selfish or amative, and not a true love for the person himself or herself. In this case, casual *'ishq* may fail to incur the solicited response, and sometimes causes aversion and dislike; 2) an obstacle that prevents immediate reciprocity such as character, presentation, faith, endeavors, conduct, or look, etcetera; and 3) a justifiable, religious, or spiritual obstacle that prevents participation, and should the circumstances be otherwise, reciprocity would take effect as a natural response to pure true love. Once such reasons subside, love will be selfless and true for the person himself or herself, and in this case, *'ishq* will be mutual. On the other hand, had it not been for the love of power, jealousy, envy, desire to preside over others, animosity, and disbelief, etcetera, people would have loved God's Messengers more than themselves, their families, or wealth. This is why the blessed companions of God's Messenger ﷺ loved him more than their own self, family, and wealth.

3.5 Treating Love With Marriage

If we agree that pure love (*'ishq*) and carnal desire are a sickness and a weakness that necessitate a treatment, and therefore are subject to therapy, then surely there is a cure for them. In

the first analysis, if the lover can reach and associate with his beloved in accordance with the divine law of *Sharī'a* and as decreed by fate, then this is the correct medicine. Such is the description of the earlier reported narration by Ibn Mas'oud, God be pleased with him, in which God's Messenger ﷺ said: "O young men, whoever among you has the means to establish a family, should get married, for marriage preserves the chastity of one's eyes and sexual organ, and whoever cannot afford to establish a family, must fast from desiring sex, for abstention in that case will protect him from sin."

This prophetic saying indicates two kinds of treatment for love and sexual desire: one is primary, and the second is tributary, and God's Messenger ﷺ opted for the primary, which is the correct treatment for love and satisfaction of sexual needs. As much as possible, and as long as it is feasible and permissible, the correct medicine should be taken without substitution. This is the meaning of the commentaries of Ibn 'Abbãss, God be pleased with him, when he said: "We recognize that marriage is the best solution for two people who are in love" (*Reported in Sunan Ibn Mãja*). This is also the correct medicine described by God Almighty after enunciating the lawful and the unlawful for marriage among women, and after prescribing self-restraint when marriage is unattainable, Almighty Allah says: ❮ Allah means to lighten your burdens, for the human being was created weak❯ (*Qur'an 4:28*). In this revelation, God Almighty states that the weakness of the human carnality and desire for sex necessitates the divine favor of allaying such difficulty, in accordance with what He made lawful in marriage among women. This is the correct treatment for satisfying sexual desire for those who do not have the required resolve, and who experience difficulty in exercising patience through self-restraint. Therefore, marriage in this case is a demonstration of divine mercy upon the servant.

3.6 Abstention As Cure

When it is not lawful, feasible, or practical for the one in love to associate with his beloved, or when the person who is the object of love declines reciprocity for the same reasons, one's attraction and irresistible impulse may then become an obsession. This can cause mental disturbance, and can further develop into chronic depression. In such case, one of the suggested therapies is to counsel the patient to free himself from such mental and emotional stress by encouraging despondence and disheartenment. In fact, only when the mind and desire lose hope in something can they

be turned off and be freed from its grip. Should the patient still suffer from depression and desire for his beloved, this indicates a serious aggravation of his sickness, and his care must be upgraded to treating a case of mental disorder, and the patient must then be admitted to supervised psychiatric care. In fact, it becomes a case of mental derangement to persist in soliciting the unattainable. This is like the case of falling in love with the sun or the moon, and constantly desiring and yearning to levitate, or become airborne, and to float with them in orbit. All reasonable people will consider such a person sick and deranged.

Unless Almighty Allah wills such union, it will surely not take place. Should association with one's beloved be unlawful by jurisprudence (*Sharī'a*), though not physically unreachable, the treatment should then be accepted on the basis of inaccessibility by fate (*qadar*) as earlier explained. In this case, the treatment of the servant, his recovery, and spiritual salvation commences by abandoning his goal. To do so, he must become convinced that his association with what he wants is impossible, unreachable, unattainable, and unlawful, and he must accept that as God's will. He also must see it as disallowed and prevented by fate. Should one's yearning still persist, and as long as his mind does not give up, and as long as his demanding impulse (*nafs ammāra*) turns down such solutions, then the servant must be convinced to give up and abandon his goal for either fear of sin and wrongdoing, or for fear of losing touch with a greater love which is more beneficial, more satisfying, and more lasting. Here too, an alternative association may be more beneficial for one's destiny.

Therefore, when wisdom and logic prevail, then one who has common sense will give serious thought to his current condition, and he will weigh the value of each alternative. He will recognize what is ephemeral and what is lasting. He will weigh the value of a transient pleasure as compared to an everlasting one. When he ponders that, he will recognize that the true and durable pleasure is constant, and it carries no unpleasant ramifications, while the tributary pleasure usually leaves once satisfied, and the consequences in most cases evolve into various categories of pain, particularly when not fully satisfied. In reality, the tributary pleasure is a mere dream and a deceptive illusion since it lacks a sound factual basis of permanency, and since it comes and goes, once satisfied, like all transient things, the desire for it ceases. Hence, it is not a true pleasure. Recognizing that will ease one's pain and sufferings. When pondering such possibilities, one will also realize that it is easier to relinquish his desire for the ephemeral than to exercise

patience with not satisfying it. One's common sense, common wisdom, intelligence, religious ethics, valor, and humanness will require him to concede to the lesser loss and to accept the limited pain that will be shortly transformed into contentment, comfort, peace, satisfaction, real pleasure, happiness, and joy. On the other hand, it is one's ignorance, passion, wantonness, amativeness, levity, indecision, phantasm, and triviality that pressure him to persist in desiring and asking for the unattainable, and to bear the consequent pain and sufferings associated with such lack of coherence and faith. However, regardless of all kinds of suggested therapies, one can only succeed when God almighty is on his side.

If one persists in his desire, and if he is trapped by his impelling passion, and morbid drive, and when the above-suggested therapies fail, then he should reassess his potential material losses, whereby, his exaggerated feelings will hinder his success at work and bring the pursuit of his other interests to stagnation, and chiefly, it will obscure his clarity and dealings with people. If even this suggestion does not work, then he should think about negative characteristics in the personality of his unattainable love. In fact, if he is able to research the human weaknesses of his beloved, he will certainly find them aplenty. He should also ask the woman's neighbors about negative aspects of her personality he couldn't recognize otherwise. He also should reflect about the incompatible aspects between them, the conceivable conflicts, disagreements, unpleasant personal patterns, personality, headaches, associations, etcetera, and one should convince himself to refuse to accept what he would otherwise bear with as normal cost of unity and love, until he is able to renounce his objective, and pursue another course.

Hence, by being logical and demanding for a moment in one's pursuit of a cure for his sickness, he will recognize that good qualities are a stimulus for love and unity, while weaknesses and frailties are a cause for disagreement, and a risk for discord and aversion. One's mind should then focus on the smoother, obvious, and more comfortable course. Furthermore, one should not be deceived by the color of the woman's skin, her body features, beauty, or youth, etcetera. In fact, he should lower his gaze, divert his glances, change the scenery, occupy his mind with a different objective, and concentrate on his spiritual and religious duties.

Should all of the above therapies fail, one then must seek the fellowship and counsel of a pious shaikh. Eventually, he will learn that he must throw himself at the threshold of God's door, humbly beg for His mercy, cry for help, and pray for His blessings.

This is the real gate of victory that will lead him to triumph over his attachments and weaknesses. When successful at reaching such state, one should ask forgiveness for his indulgences, observe praiseworthy virtues, restrain his tongue, refrain from discussing his feelings towards his beloved, withhold from divulging what he came to know about her through various circumstances, and abstain from backbiting her, defaming her, or hurting her feelings. Otherwise, he would be wrong, and he would have transgressed his limits. He also should not speak proudly about her, or about his past feelings towards her.

3.7 The Wine Of The Spirit

It must be understood herein, that love for other than God Almighty is polytheism, and since Allah created one heart for each human being, the focus of such heart must not be divided. Even the human physical heart must remain free from extraneous matters, because it must carry its natural functions and pump blood to the rest of the body. Similarly, the human heart must remain filled with love for Almighty Allah alone, though, it must perform other preordained functions and duties, and exhibit praiseworthy character in relationship to others. In this sense, we can say that love (*'ishq*) for other than Allah is wine for the spirit, and a toxicant that can cloud one's clarity, and obscure one's real purpose. It inebriates the mind, impairs one's proper functions, occupies the heart from concentrating on the remembrance (*zikr*) of Allah, and hinders one's relishing the inner audience (*munãjãt*) with his Creator, and from delighting in the bliss of His sublime presence.

In truth, occupying one's heart with attachment and love for someone else besides God Almighty breaks up one's devotion, for the heart naturally adores its beloved, and that is worship (*'ibãda*). Love is even the core of worship, and worship is the mortification of ego, the apex of devotion, submissiveness, and glorification. Hence, how can a believer steal from his devotion and love for Almighty Allah, and divide the loyalty of his heart for the sake of a creature like himself? On the other hand, the exclusion of anyone besides God Almighty from one's heart is the ladder of spiritual success, the gate of nearness to Almighty Allah, and the triumph of good over evil. Such are the qualities of God's deputies (*awliya*), the elite (*khawãs*), the learned ones (*'ulama*), and the true monotheists (*muwahhideen*). On the other hand, there is not a single saying of God's Messenger ﷺ in which he uses the term *'ishq*. Yet, there are two kinds of *'ishq*: 1) permissible;

and 2) impermissible, and as we have earlier explained, *'ishq* is a common illness, and Allah has created a cure for it. Hence, it is incumbent upon the believer to solicit the proper cure.

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PART III
SIMPLE FOOD &MEDICINE

PART III
SIMPLE FOOD & MEDICINE
AND THEIR
PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL
PROPERTIES AND BENEFITS

– A –

Agallochum (*Aghlajoun*)
Excaecaria agallocha
(*See Aloes-Wood*)

Al-Fãtiha (الفاتحة)
The Opening Chapter of the Qur'an

Al-Fãtiha, is the Opening Chapter, the carrying vessel, and the fountainhead of the Qur'an. It contains the essence of the Qur'an and represents its substance. It is the original theme of the Book from which the Qur'anic revelation flows. *Al-Fãtiha* is the seven revealed couplets containing the servant's prayers and the divine answer and guidance. It is the ultimate cure for all diseases, and the most perfect protective charm (*ruqya*) from evil, the key to true wealth and success, the preserver of strength, and the best medicine that expels anxiety, stress, fear, sorrow, and melancholia for those who recognize its worth and submit to its superiority, and who render it the correct recognition, who are skilful in reciting it and using it correctly in curing their disease, who understand the true meaning of recovery and preventive medicine, and who understand the inmost secret behind its revelation.

The recital of the *süra* is thus described to elucidate the countless miraculous episodes narrated by the companions of God's messenger ﷺ, upon whom be peace, and where, by God's leave, their true faith helped them to nullify the poisonous effects of snakebites and scorpion's stings, and to recover instantaneously. In one such event, God's messenger ﷺ acknowledged the clarity, purity, and faith of one of his companions, commenting: "And how did you know that *Al-Fãtiha* (does work as) a charm (*ruqya*)? "

Therefore, whoever is assisted by the clarity and purity of his true faith, certitude, and his intrinsic insight, God willing, he will be able to learn the innermost meaning and worth of this *süra* and what it encompasses of factual recognition that adds to his testimony of the oneness (*Tawheed*) of God Almighty, and helps him understand the divine essence and recognize the divine names, attributes, and supreme powers (*cf. Principals of Healing*). The *süra* also establishes the supremacy of the divine laws (*Sharī'a*), confirms fate (*Qadar*) as the predetermined result of one's deeds, and announces the assurance of the coming of the appointed hour, proves the impartiality and oneness of the divine attributes of lordship (*Rubübiyya*) and the supreme sovereignty of God Almighty (*Ulühiyya*), and repudiates every untruth ascribed to God Almighty that implies anthropomorphism, or lie that innovates human divinity.

The *süra* also confirms the human need to adopt an unwavering trust and dependence on his Lord, and to abdicate any claims to all rights and authority, surrendering them to the Lord of the universes—the creator, controller, sustainer, and cherisher of every life form. The command is His, all praises are due to Him, the dispensation of good is under His control, and the final judgment remains His forever. Everything depends on Him, every life form is sustained solely by Him, and every wandering soul is in immutable need of His guidance, and in dire need of His blessings. Such guidance is the sustaining nourishment of one's body, mind, and soul in this world and in the hereafter, and it is the binding and unbreakable rope that ties this world to the hereafter. Such guidance guarantees people's real interests, and protects them against real losses in this world and thereafter.

In fact, the divine blessings and favors are interlocked with such guidance, and whoever realizes that, and recognizes its clarity will require no medicines or charms to help him overcome his mostly self-inflicted illnesses, and therefore, commencing any beneficial project and avoiding the cause of harm and adversities needs a renewed innate nature (*fitra*), a new spirit, a different perception, and an ever-renewed affirmation of faith, and by God, there does not exist falsehood, innovation, or argument to which *Sürat-ul Fãtiha* is not the accurate answer, the indisputable response, and the required superior power that nullifies it.

Furthermore, there is no pathway to any divine knowledge that is not accessible by *Sürat-ul Fãtiha*, including knowledge of the heart, its illnesses, diseases, and weaknesses—all have their cure in the essence of *Sürat-ul Fãtiha*. This magnificent

süra is the master key that opens all doors, and the map of every safe pathway, and there is no road for the seekers on God's path which does not begin and end in this most exalted *süra*. By God, its worth is even greater, its benefits are priceless, and it stands beyond description or explanation.

Whenever a servant recognizes its worth, wears it as his shield, acknowledges Who spoke it and revealed it as an effulgent light and as the ultimate cure and perfect preventive medicine for the health and well-being of the body, mind, and soul—and whenever a servant understands it, and fathoms the imperative and indispensable duties associated with it, then no innovation or doubt can traverse his pathway undetected and without being obliterated, and no polytheistic thought can cross his mind uncensured and without being purged, and any illness that befalls such a blessed servant will be light and passing.

Although *Sürat-ul Fãtiha* is the master key to the entire treasury of the earth and the heavens, yet, not everyone has the needed expertise and ability to use it. Moreover, should the seekers of material wealth recognize its value, understand its inmost secret, and decipher its code, they would undoubtedly hasten to sculpt the right size, pattern, and number of pegs needed to correspond to the pins in the bolt that opens the majestic safe of *Sürat-ul Fãtiha*, which in turn is the master key to the entire treasury of the divine Qur'anic revelation. Thereat, they will be able to stand before an ocean of unlimited wealth, and no one will deprive them of taking whatever they wish for, or of carrying whatever they want.

What we expressed hereinabove is the truth and not an exaggeration or a metaphor. However, God Almighty in His unfathomable divine luminous wisdom chose to make it a secret. He also chose to conceal such unlimited wealth from the feeble minds and the materialistic ephemeral desires of the majority of the people of this world. In fact, concealing the earthly treasures from such diseased minds and hearts is a divine wisdom, and whenever God Almighty conceals such treasures in this world, He allows demons and evil spirits to inflict injury on whomever is tempted to near them, and that is to prevent any intruder from reaching these treasures. In fact, there are no forces that can overcome such evil spirits except for noble and exalted souls of the upper realms, who can nullify and freeze the effects of such evil spirits by their mere presence and passage, and there is no evil spirit that can challenge them, and whoever dares to embark on such a venture will be doomed to destruction. On the

other hand, obviously, the souls of the majority of people in this world are not of such caliber, and cannot overcome or conquer the evil spirits, and therefore they cannot receive such a prize.

This is *Sürat-ul Fãti<u>h</u>a*, the Opening Chapter of the Qur'an which reads as follows: ❮ In the Name of Allah, the most Merciful and Compassionate ' Praises be to Allah, the Creator and Lord of the universes ' The Merciful and Compassionate ' Master of the day of judgment ' You alone we worship, and Your help alone we seek ' Guide us on the straight path ' The path of those You blessed, not those who incur wrath, nor those who go astray ❯ (*Qur'an 1:1-7*).[1]

Aloes (*Sabïr*)
(*See Aloe vera*)

Aloe vera (*Ulwa; Sabïr*)

Qays bin Rãfi' al-Qaysi narrated that God's messenger ﷺ said: "Aloes and wart-cress[2] are a sure cure for an illness." (*Reported by Abu Dãwoud in the book of Marãseel*). Um Salma narrated that God's messenger ﷺ visited her after Abu Salma died, and on that day, she had spread fresh aloe juice over her face. God's messenger ﷺ asked her: "What happened to your face, O Um Salma?" She replied: "It is only aloe[3] juice I applied to my face for moistening, O Messenger of God, and it does not have perfume." He replied: "It contracts the tissues, and it can burn up your skin. Apply it if you wish at night, and not during the day." (*Reported by Abu Dãwoud in the Sunan*)

Aloe vera is hot and dry in the second degree. It has ample benefits, particularly the variety of Indian aloe. It neutralizes accumulations of bilious yellow superfluities in the brain which sometimes affect the optic nerve. Massaging the forehead and the temple with a mixture of aloe juice and rose oil relieves headache, cures ulcers of the nose, mouth sores, and boils of the mouth. It opens obstructions in the liver, and abates depression and anxiety (*melancholia*). The Persian variety of aloe gives a keen edge to the brain, and enlivens the heart. Drinking two tablespoons of aloe mixed in a glass of water helps purge corrupt juices, bilious and phlegmatic excesses that originate in the stomach, and abates the false sense of hunger. Drinking aloe juice in cold weather

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[1] Also see 1.10 On Nullifying the Effects of A Poisonous Bite By Reciting The Opening Chapter of the Holy Qur'an

[2] Wart-cress: Arb. *thufã'; Rashãd barri.*

[3] Aloe contains alum which is an astringent. Aloe, Arb. *Sabar*, also means diet; and it also means imposing fasting on a convalescing animal to help its recovery.

can cause bile irritation, bleeding in the intestines, and diarrhea generated by such bleeding.

Aloe vera also drives away jaundice, helps cure ulceration of the stomach, removes swelling of the eyelids, and opens obstructions in the kidney. Mixing aloe with drugs causes their harmful effects to subside.[1]

Aloeswood (*Arãk*)
Tooth brush tree
Salvadora persica

Imam Bukhãri reported that God's Messenger ﷺ used to brush his teeth with a toothpick of Aloeswood (Arb. *Miswãk*) upon waking up, and before taking his ablution for the morning prayers.

There are different kinds of *Miswãk*; among them, God's Messenger ﷺ used some from pomegranate wood, basil wood, and sometimes reed, while Aloeswood has a more pleasant taste than most of them, and is the best for brushing the teeth. Describing the benefits of regularly brushing one's teeth, Ibn 'Abbãss, God be pleased with him, said: "There are ten benefits in a toothbrush: it freshens the mouth, strengthens the gums, dissolves phlegm, fights plaque, prepares the stomach for the next meal, embraces the prophetic tradition, pleases the Lord, adds to one's merit, and gives joy to the angels." Also, among other benefits, brushing one's teeth regularly renders one's speech more eloquent, generates appetite, clears the brain, generates a sense of well-being, and is even more pleasant when used after soaking the stick of Aloeswood in rose-water. (*Also see Indian Aloe wood*)

Aloes-Wood (*Ulwa*)
(*See Indian Aloe wood*)

Amber (*'Anbar*)
Sperm oil; Ambergris

Aromatic substances are derived from flowers and balsams, herbs, spices, and from animal secretions from which some essential oils and fragrant ointments are produced, while other substances are made from the resins of nonvolatile plant oils.

Ambergris (Arb. *'Anbar*) is an animal secretion formed in the intestines of sperm whales. When fresh, it is black, greasy, and exudes an extremely unpleasant odor,[2] but after exposure to the air it hardens,

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[1] Also see Aloeswood, Indian Aloe wood; Fruit of aloe.

[2] Perfume manufacturers today use high alcohol dilutions to remove its odor, and for mellowing.

turns gray, and develops a pleasant aroma. The lighter the color of Ambergris, the better is its quality, and the darker it is, the less is its quality or value. This is the substance which is used in making perfumes and some pharmaceutical preparations.

On the other hand, sperm oil, mistakenly thought to be the coagulated semen of the whale, is sometimes confused by common people with ambergris, and is the oily substance taken from the head and sometimes the fat and bones of the sperm whale, and is used as a fuel for lamps, a lubricant, an ingredient for soap, detergents, and cosmetics, as well as a softener, and a preservative for leather.

Spermaceti is another oily substance which is extracted from the sperm oil, and is also used in making ointments, pomades, face creams, and candles. On the other hand, whale oil is taken from the blue whale and the humpback, and is an edible fat, in addition to its use like sperm oil, and here, too, common people confuse it with the perfume oil known as *'Anbar*.

As for the ambergris fragrance (*'Anbar*), it is sometimes diluted, blended, filtered, and then aged for up to a year, and is used as an Oriental fragrance in varying degrees of concentration. Even Avicenna was not sure of its source, though he said it comes from a spring in the sea. On the other hand, he is said to have discovered the distillation process for essential oils, and after that, knowledge of distillation spread throughout Europe, as the Europeans returned with samples of Arab essences.

Early sources contended that *'Anbar* is extracted from plants such as the sweet-gum tree, the amber balm, the storax, or the satin walnut tree. Some sources confused the sources of ambergris and musk. Others contended that *'Anbar* is produced from the scent glands of the civet cat, or they spoke of it as the product of the male musk deer, or as the castor which is obtained from the beaver; and yet, some say that amber is the powdered substance of a fossilized resin from ancient trees. The ancient Greeks saw amber as hardened tears, or the rays of sunset. This variety of amber occurs as irregular masses, nodules, or drops that vary from transparent to translucent and have a yellow color, sometimes tinted red, orange, or brown. Sometimes, amber may be clouded by innumerable minuscule air bubbles, or can contain fossilized insects or plants. This variety of amber is used in jewelry and as a decorative material. However, and as we explained earlier, *'Anbar* as perfume is actually the fatty substance that is the product of the sperm whale.

'Anbar is hot and dry — it strengthens the heart, the brain, the senses, and the limbs. It is beneficial in the treatment of colic, facial paralysis, phlegmatic disorders, stomach illnesses due to cold temperament, thick gases caused by obstructions in the intestines, and can be taken mixed with drinks, or used in inunctions as balm. Ambergris oil also helps cold symptoms when the patient inhales its aromatic vapor, and helps reduce minor headaches or migraine headaches (*hemicrania*) due to cold symptoms. When cooked with roses, *'Anbar* helps reduce heart pain, and it is called the king of perfumes. (*Also see Fish*)

Ambergris (*Amir Bãris*)
(*See Amber*)

Antelope (*Zhabi*)
Antelope male
(*See Meat*)

Antimony (*Athmad*)

Antimony sulfate is a silver-white, nonmetallic chemical produced from the Black Kohl stone which is pulverized and used to darken the eyes — also called Isphahan Collyrium, which is the best source, and otherwise found in Morocco. The best kind is of crystalline structure which is brittle. Its temperament is cold and dry. Antimony is used in compound medicines, it strengthens the optic nerve and is considered the best kohl when mixed with musk for elderly people with poor vision weakened by old age. As kohl, it also helps reduce skin flap growing on the eyelid, mange of eyelids, and it relaxes eyestrain, detoxifies eye moisture, eases congestion, helps natural cleansing of the eyes, helps to protect the eyes from dust particles floating in the air, and brightens one's sight. When antimony sulfate is mixed with honey diluted in water, applying it on the edge of the eyelid can reduce headaches. Furthermore, when mixed with light fatty substances, antimony helps skin burns if applied before scabs are formed. Antimony also helps in remedying phlyctenular or blistering conjunctivitis.

Imam al-Tirmithi and Abu Dãwoud reported from the narration of Ibn 'Abbãss, God be pleased with him, that God's Messenger ﷺ used to carry a gar in which he kept Collyrium mixed with Musk, and he used to apply a salve from it every night, three times for each eye. Applying it before retiring to bed is healthier than using it during the day, and it helps the growing of eyelashes,

and in dissolving excess mucus. Ibn 'Abbãss narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Antimony is your best kohl — it brightens the eyes and helps the growing of eyelashes" (*Reported in Sunan Ibn Mãja*).

Arabian Seed (*Habba-tu Sawdã'*)
(*See Black seed*)

Asparagus (*Halyoun*)
Asparagus

Asparagus is cultivated for its tender shoots and edible spears, and is an herbaceous perennial of the Liliaceae family. Propagation is done mostly by seeds which can be harvested in two to three years after planting, and for up to fifteen years or more.

Asparagus is hot and moist. It opens obstructions of the kidney, increases semen, abates back pain, and eases the pain of a woman in labor.

Astmary (*fãghiya-tul Jinãn*)
Balsamita sauveolens
(*See Costmary*)

– B –

Banana[1] (*Talh*)
Bird of Paradise
Plantain; Musa x Paradisiaca

God Almighty spoke of a special creation He prepared for the companions of the right hand, and awaiting them in their eternal dwellings in paradise wherein they will live in gardens beneath which rivers flow. Among other beneficial creations in paradise, the believers will find ❮ Clustered plantains ❯ (*Qur'an 56:29*). (Arb. *Fi Talhen Mandüd*).

Most interpreters agree that *Talh* in this verse refers to banana. Some scholars have interpreted the Qur'anic Arabic word *Talh* to mean the Mimosa tree, or the Morocco gum tree (*acacia gummifera*) that grows in hot climates, and from which is produced a sweet perfume (Arb. *sant samghi*, E. Gum Arabic), a gum which is used in medicine for the treatment of bronchial illnesses, and for stabilizing emulsions, (*cf. Mimosa Tree*). The mimosa tree of the mimosa

[1] Arb. *Talh*, SP., plantain, Plantago, banana tree; or it could mean the tropical banana plant known as *Musa x Paradisiaca* (cf. Plantain, Plantago), yielding a coarse fruit eaten as a cooked vegetable.

family, grows in warm regions, and has bipinnate leaves. However, in paradise, the spikes will be replaced with fruits that will be arranged in continuous and uniform order. Other scholars interpret *Talh* to mean a special kind of acacia tree which flowers profusely, the flowers appearing in tiers one above another. Although the interpretation of the Qur'anic Arabic word *Talh* does literally mean the Morocco gum tree, the writer here regards it in an allegorical sense, and as a symbolic description, since no eye has ever seen what is created for the dwellers in paradise.

In any case, the banana fruit is hot and moist in the first degree. The benefits of bananas are greater when they are ripe and sweet. Banana is beneficial for the treatment of chronic inflammation of the chest and lungs (*asthma*), and common symptoms of hoarseness in the chest and wheezing. Banana also benefits recurrent cough, expulsion of phlegm, ulcers of the kidneys, and ulcers of the bladder. Eating bananas helps expulsion of urine, increases the production of semen, arouses sexual desire, and promotes bowel movement. Bananas should be eaten before meals, however, they do effect the stomach by generating excessive discharge of yellow bile and phlegm, and such side-effects are usually reduced by eating sugar or honey with the bananas.

Barley (*Sha'ir*)
Hordeum

'Aisha, God be pleased with her, narrated that "when someone fell ill in God's Messenger's house, he kept a pot of barley soup cooking on the fire until the patient pass through one of the two confines"—meaning recovery or death, and he asked them to eat from it. He also used to say: "Feed your patient a soup of barley, for it enlivens and refreshes the heart of the patient, dispels his anguish, sorrow, and distress, and it washes his stomach clean just as one of you washes her face of dirt"

Sorrow dries up one's body, and particularly his stomach, and of course, lack of food has much to contribute to that. Barley broth also helps flush away unnecessary accumulations, soothes the body, comes to its defense, reduces tension, balances the humors, lifts the spirit, and helps one to regain his poise. (*Cf. Dietary Planning*).

A soup of boiled barley is a more nutritious food than a decoction of pearled barley, or barley groats (*ptisan*). Barley soup is also good for cough and roughness of the throat. It suppresses and balances acute intemperaments caused by foul low-caloric food

in the stomach, it increases the excretion of urine, clears the stomach, quenches the thirst, lowers the temperature in hot diseases, arrests fermentation, dissolves obstructions, and hastens intestinal evacuation.

To prepare this soup, add one portion of good quality crushed barley to five portions of fresh spring water, then add salt and mild spices to taste. Make sure that you use a clean pot. Place the pot on medium heat, and boil the contents down to one-fifth of the water. Remove the barley, and serve as needed. (*Also see Talbïna*).

Boiled barley water seems to agree with the digestive system. When barley is cooked whole, its nutrients pass by the system and confer little of their benefits. However, drinking the broth of crushed barley helps to accelerate the penetration of its nutrients into the patient's system, acts as a stronger cathartic, and proves more effective in stimulating bowel movement.

Batavian endive (*Hindiba*)
Escarole
(*See Endive*)

Beef; Beeves; Oxen (*Baqar*)
Bos; Bovins
(*See Meat*)

Ben-oil tree (*Duhn al-Bãn*)
Moringa pterigo perma
(*See Oil*)

Berries (*H̲abbah*)
(*See Black Seed*)

Billy goat; He-goat (*Tais*)
Ovis capra
(*See Meat*)

Bird of Paradise (*Maowz al-Yãbãn*)
Banana; Maowz al-Janna
Musaceae; Musa
(*See Banana*)

Bison; Buffalo (*Jãmous; Baisün*)
Bos bison; Bos bubalus
(*See Meat*)

Black Seed (*Habba-tu Sawdã*)
Black cumin; Fennel flower
Nigella sativa

Abu Huraira, God be pleased with him, narrated in the correct prophetic traditions that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Use this black seed regularly, because it has a cure for every disease except death" (*Reported by Bukhãri*).

This is the common fennel flower plant (*Nigella sativa*) of the buttercup family which herb grows to about 16-24 inches. This plant has finely divided foliage, and has blue flowers. From it comes a small rectangular black seed which is also known as the blessed seed (Arb. *Habbat-ul Baraka*), or black seed, and some call it Arabian seed because of its habitat. This plant is sometimes mistakenly confused with the fennel herb plant (*Foeniculum vulgare*). The Black Seed plant is also known by other names, and they vary between places. Some call it black caraway, others call it black cumin, or Indian cumin, or even coriander seeds. Nevertheless, this is the *Nigella sativa* we described earlier, which has been known and used for over two thousand years, and is also known in Persian as *Shonaiz*.

The ancient Egyptians knew and used the black seed and described it as a medical botanical in their papyrology. The Romans also knew this seed, called it Greek coriander seed, and used it as a dietary supplement.

A special oil is extracted from the fennel flower seeds[1] which is then used in the preparation of medical formulas and benefits bronchitis and coughs, helps increase body tone, acts as a digestive tonic, quells belching, dries up damp stomach, stimulates excretion of urine, dissolves wind, quells colic pain and stomach-gas colic, expels worms from the intestinal tract, removes patches of leukoderma, benefits some skin allergies, quells quartan phlegmonous fever, opens obstructions, stimulates menstrual period, increase the flow of breast milk, and can cause excessive salivation. Adding a few drops of its oil[2] to coffee calms the nervous system, and helps pertussis, dry cough, asthma, and bronchial respiratory complaints. Taking the black seed oil unmixed or undiluted can produce gripe, and greatly irritates the digestive system.

[1] Containing keton and thiamin. Cf. Mahfouz M. and El-Dakhakhiny M. *Islamic Medicine*, Vol. 2 1982. (Egypt) Also see: "Some chemical and pharmacological properties of the new and anti-asthmatic drug Nigellone." Egypt Pharm. Bull. 1960.

[2] Out of the black seeds, about 1.5% of volatile or essential oil is produced, and approximately 33% remains as stable oil.

In his *'Canon of Medicine'*, Avicenna maintains that "the black seed acts as an expectorant, it stimulates the body's energy, and helps recovery from fatigue and dispiritedness."

Placing the powdered black seeds in a cloth and inhaling them regularly helps reduce the effects of common colds. The blessed companions of God's Messenger ﷺ used to place twenty-one black seeds in a linen cloth which they soaked overnight in water, and in the morning, they used to place drops of this solution in each nostril to help relieve nasal congestion, and head cold distress.

In fact, the black seed has numerous benefits for all cold and wet illnesses, and can certainly benefit some hot and dry illnesses such as conjunctivitis, whereby combining a limited quantity of black seeds with other drugs can help accelerate their penetration. Avicenna, among other renowned physicians, gave the example of such action when saffron is combined with camphor in a pill. For this reason also, one cannot discount the possible benefits of treating a hot illness with an herb of hot characteristics, as shown in the combination of the slippery root, or the black-wort root with sugar, or the common comfrey (*symphytum officinale*) with sugar, among other hot medical botanicals in the treatment of conjunctivitis, which is also a hot illness.

Black seed is hot and dry in the third degree. A decoction of black seeds helps in the treatment of abnormal absence of menstruation (*amenorrhea*) and menstrual difficulties (*dysmenorrhea*), kills intestinal worms, and can promote abortion, as well as helps tertian fever, paralysis, and piles among other illnesses. A decoction of black seeds can promote contraction of the uterus after birth, and it benefits eruptive skin diseases. Adding the black seed to one's diet helps gout, and it can balance the uric acid in the blood.

Black seeds also help reduce swellings, and remove scales in ringworm. Drinking a decoction of crushed black seeds sweetened with honey can help dissolve gallstones and kidney stones, and when taken over a few days, it increases urine, menses, and milk. Boiling finely ground black seeds with vinegar, making a paste of it, and spreading a plaster of it over the stomach cures ringworm, and it will have a stronger effect in expelling worms and other intestinal parasites when mixed with a fresh or cooked solution of bitter apple or wild gourd (*citrillus colocynthis*; Arb. *h̲anz̲al*).

An ointment of black seeds also stimulates the growth of the beard, and can prevent hair graying.

A poultice of black seed benefits in the treatment of jaundice as well, and helps to retrieve worts. As a head bandage, black seeds can abate headaches. Drinking one half miscal and up to a miscal of an infusion of black seeds is good for shortness of breath and helps against the bites of tarantulas. Soaking seven black seeds in a woman's milk, then snuffing it through the nostrils helps sufferers of jaundice. Cooking black seeds with vinegar and rinsing one's mouth with it helps the gums, and relieves toothache. Snuffing a solution of ground black seeds in water reduces excessive tearing.

A decoction of finely powdered black seeds prepared with a salve base of essential oil of coriander seeds, and placing three drops of it in each ear relieves common cold, opens obstructions, and dissolves wind. Frying whole black seeds, finely grinding them up, then soaking them in any vegetable oil, and placing three to four drops in each nostril relieves common cold symptoms and nasal congestions accompanied by excessive sneezing. Roasting finely powdered black seeds over the fire, and mixing them with oil of orrisroot (*Iris florentina*), or oil of iris-root (*Iridaceae officinal*), or oil of henna plant, or oil of Camphire plant, which oil is extracted from their rhizomes (Arb. *Juthmour*), and making an ointment which is then spread over festering crural ulcers after their lavation with vinegar is also beneficial in curing such ulcerations. Moreover, plastering a trituration of black seeds mixed with vinegar over patches of leukoderma, or patches of melanoleukoderma, or lichen (*lichen agrius*) helps in their cure. Furthermore, an ointment of black seeds can prevent gray hair. Swallowing two drams of a trituration of black seeds soaked in cold water daily helps treat dogbite, and sometimes can save one from a potentially serious dogbite. Inhaling the oil of black seeds can help against facial paralysis and tetanus, and eliminates their causes. As a fumigant, the smoke of black seeds drives away flying insects. Dissolving an extract of comfrey in water, spraying it over hemorrhoids and applying finely ground black seeds to it has great effect on their cure. Lastly, as a supplement, one should not take more than two drams daily with water. In fact, the medical benefits contained in the black seeds are numerous, and to know them, one must study the works of wise physicians. However, some physicians claim that eating the black seed excessively can cause death.

From such extensive healing traits among other properties contained in this blessed seed, we can understand the meaning contained in the divine words of the holy Qur'anic verse: ❮ It destroys everything by the permission of its Lord❯ (*Qur'an 46:25*),

meaning everything, or any morphological structure that is subject to destruction — that is, annihilation of the arrogance and activities of the nonbelievers against the divine revelation, before bringing them to reckoning. Therefore, the correct religious analytical concept of "a cure for every illness except death" has its canonical limitations, as in the Qur'anic verse relating to honey, where God Almighty says: ‹ in it, there is cure for people › (*Qur'an 16:69*), and the majority of scholars agree that honey cures many people from many illnesses, but it does not cure all people from all illnesses. The same interpretation is found in the verse describing the Qur'an itself as ‹ a cure and mercy for the believers › (*Qur'an 17:82*), and also the verse concerning the people arguing against the divine revelation, because our Lord and Creator, the Most Exalted, decided this time to reveal His last message to the entire humanity in Arabic: ‹ ...non-Arabic, and Arabic! Say: "It is a guidance and healing for the believers" › (*Qur'an 41:11*). In this sense, the holy Qur'an is a cure and a light for the body, soul and mind of the believers, while it is blinding, deafening, and destructive for those who reject and argue against the divine revelation.

This is another living miracle-herb whose benefits are disclosed to us through the prophetic guidance of God's Messenger ﷺ, and respecting the canonical limitations, we have thus explained in summary the benefits of using the black seed, also known as 'the blessed seed.' — Allah knows best.

Black truffle (*Kushnoj; Kam'a aswad*)
Tuber; Ascomycetous fungi
(See Truffle)

Blessed Seed (*Habbat-ul Baraka*)
(See Black seed)

Blue-leek (*Basal al-'afreet*)
Allium ampeloprassum
(See Wild-leek)

Bog-rush (*Ithkher*)
(See Ginger grass)

Bonham's; Sand partridge (*Qabaj*)
Perdriz; Perdix perdix
(See Meat: II Fowls)

Bottle-gourd (*Dubã'*)
(*See Gourd*)

Bread[1] (*Khubz*)

Ibn 'Abbãss narrated that 'Aisha, God be pleased with her, said: "God's Messenger ﷺ used to like sopped bread in a broth."

'Abdullãh bin Omar, God be pleased with both of them, narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ once said: "I wish to have some bread made of whole grain wheat, coated with ghee, and dipped in milk." Someone in the assembly left quietly, went to his home and prepared such a dish. When he presented it to God's Messenger ﷺ, he asked him: "Where did you keep this ghee?" "In a lizard's hole," the man replied. Hearing that, God's Messenger ﷺ held back, and asked the man to take it away. (*Reported in Sunan Abu Dãwoud*)

In an apocryphal saying attributed to God's Messenger ﷺ, Imam al-Baihaqi reported that 'Aisha, God be pleased with her, narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Honor bread, for Allah has made the earth and the sky its servants."

Bread dough is most beneficial when kneaded properly, and when it is fully leavened. The best baking is done in a clay-lined bread baking oven (Arb. *tannür*). Next in baking quality comes bread baked in common brick ovens, and in the third category comes bread baked in hot ashes. The best of bread is made of fresh wheat, and the most nutritious of its variety is made with semolina, while the healthiest is made of the pulp of wheat, which provides more nutritional values, though it is slower in digestion because it contains little bran. Next in nutritional value comes the white bread, and third comes bread made of coarsely ground grains. It is best to eat fresh bread by the end of the day in which it was baked. Soft bread is more nourishing and is easier to digest. Soft bread softens the stomach and is easier to pass through the digestive tract. Stale bread and bread crumbs are less nourishing, and are harder to digest.

Wheat bread temperament is partially hot in the second degree. Bread is classified in-between moist and dry. Its dryness comes from what the fire dehydrates, and its moistness represents the balance of its freshness.

Eating wheat bread causes rapid weight gain, while bread made with milk causes severe constipation, though it is most nutritious, and finally, bread crumbs cause intestinal gas and

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[1] Cf. Cravings of The Sick Person; also see Dietary Planning. Part I

are slow to digest. Bread made with yogurt is constipating and is slow to pass through the bowels. Barleycorn bread is cold and dry in the second degree and is less nourishing than wheat bread. (*Also see Broth*)

Broiled Calf (*Mashwi*)
Veal

God Almighty described the initial reaction and hospitality of His blessed prophet Abraham, peace be upon him, when he received the two honored (and mysterious) guests, and ❮ he brought before them a broiled calf ❯ (*Qur'an 51:26*). [Arb. h̲anīth̲ : i.e., *broiled over heated stones*]

Um Salma, God be pleased with her, said that she placed a cutlet of broiled meat (Arb. *mashwi*) before God's messenger ﷺ and he ate from it and then attended to his prayers without taking ablution. (*Reported in sah̲īh̲ Tirmithi*). Also on this subject, 'Abdullāh bin al-H̲arth said: "We ate broiled meat together with God's messenger ﷺ inside the mosque." (*ibid.*) Mughīrah bin Shu'ba said: "I stayed one night as guest in God's messenger's house ﷺ and he asked his household to broil a rib of veal. When they brought it, he took a knife and began carving and serving from it until Bilāl came to announce the call to prayers, and God's messenger ﷺ immediately dropped the knife and stopped carving the meat." (*ibid.*)

The best broiled meat is that of a one year old sheep (*Ovis aries*), and second-best is that of a young fattened calf (i.e., up to two years of age). Broiled meat is hot and moist leaning to dry, it generates black bile in adequate measure, and it is the best food for strong, healthy, and athletic people.

It is more beneficial, more moist, and lighter on the stomach to partially cook the meat before broiling it, and it is healthier than frying it. Meat broiled on charcoal is healthier than bread cooked over a direct flame. (*Also see Meat*)

Broth, meat (*T̲h̲arīd*)

A dish sopped with bread, meat and broth, and dressed with *Talbīna* (*Cf. Dietary Planning*) is rich in nutritional value, easily digestible and tasty. 'Aisha asserted that she heard God's Messenger ﷺ say: "Talbīna enlivens the innermost heart of the sick, and lessens his sorrow." It is also narrated by 'Aisha, God be pleased with her, that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "When afflicted by what you dislike, use pleasing and nourishing broth to overcome it."

It is also reported in the traditions that when someone fell ill in God's Messenger's house, he kept a pot of soup on the fire until the patient passed through one of the two confines—meaning recovery or death. When he learned about someone's illness, he immediately replied: "Give him a broth, for it washes the patient's stomach clean, just as one of you washes her face of dirt."

Broth agrees with the digestive system, helps to accelerate the penetration of its nutrients into the patient's system, acts as a strong cathartic, and proves more effective in maintaining bowel regularity, and protecting the stomach lining.

God's Messenger ﷺ also said about meat broth: "It enlivens the innermost heart," denoting herein the cardia of the stomach. In fact, broth soothes the stomach, and lessens the patient's sorrow, for sorrow and grief cool the humors and weaken body defenses, because one's soul (*rü<u>h</u>*) is inclining then towards the heart, which is its natural abode. A broth is easily digestible, nutritious, filling, and gives relief from stress and sorrow. A broth also warms up one's stomach, rejuvenates the body's innate heat, and hence lessens the trauma brought about by one's sufferings. In fact, sorrow dries up one's body, and particularly the stomach. On the other hand, hot broth moistens the stomach, strengthens and nourishes it, and subsequently the effects will reach the heart. Furthermore, frequently when under stress, the patient's stomach produces a higher level of gastric juices, and accumulates phlegm and purulence — hence, taking the broth helps flush away such unnecessary accumulations, as well as soothes the body, comes to its defense, breaks the tension, balances the humors, raises the spirit, and helps one to regain his health.

As we noted earlier, *<u>Th</u>arïd* is made of bread and meat. Bread is the best of nutrients, and meat is the best live-food substance (Arb. *adïm*) the crust of this earth has ever produced, and is absolutely the nearest fiber to that of a human body, and moreover, meat is the food of the dwellers of paradise. (*Also see Meat; Dietary planning*)

Brushing one's teeth (*Siwãk*)
(*See Toothpick*)

Buckthorn (*Nabaq*)
Rhamnus
(*See Lotus fruit; Jujube*)

Buffalo; Bison (*Jãmous*; *Baisün*)
Bos bubalus; Bos bison
(*See Meat*)

Bustard (*Hubãri*)
Otis
(*See Meat: II Fowls*)

Butter (*Zubd*)

Ibn Bishr al-Salami and his brother, God be pleased with them, narrated that God's messenger ﷺ visited their house, and they offered him butter and dates, which they knew he liked. (*Reported in Sunan Abu Dãwoud*).

Butter is hot and moist in the first degree. It has numerous benefits, and acts as a decoctant and a solvent, it accelerates maturation of a swelling, and helps the healing of most kinds of recurrent swellings, including those of the gums (*calcoid*), the area adjacent to the bladder, the ear, and most swellings affecting women and teenage boys and girls.

Licking butter helps control expectoration of bloody discharge of the lungs. Butter is a general emollient, a palliative, and an aperient or a mild laxative, and it benefits constipation, the nerves, recurrent hardening of abnormal fibrous tissue growth, or tumorlike induration (*scleroma*) caused by imbalance of the black bile and the phlegm.

Inunction of butter on the roots of infant's teeth eases their growing. Butter also benefits dry cough caused by cold symptoms and dry air, and helps cure skin infections seen on the faces of children as yellow, crusting, and infected patches, also known as impetigo. Butter weakens the appetite, which effect can be overcome by eating honey and dates with it, and this particularly helps the depraved appetite of the pregnant woman. Hence, God's messenger ﷺ balanced butter with honey and date as narrated in the above prophetic tradition. (*Also see Clarified butter*)

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Calambac tree (*'Oud-u Nadd*)
(*See Aloes-Wood*)

Cedrat tree
(*See Citrus*)

Celery (*Karfas*; *Karfas nabti*)
Apium graveolens
Marsh parsley; Mountain parsley; Smallage; Wild parsley

An apocryphal tradition contends that God's messenger ﷺ said: "Whoever eats celery before going to bed will have sweet breath, and he will be free from toothache." This tradition is falsely attributed to God's messenger ﷺ. However, celery does freshen the breath.

Celery is hot and dry, and some say it is moist, and it opens obstructions of the liver and the spleen. Eating it fresh strengthens the stomach and balances cold liver, helps the excretion of urine, stimulates menstrual period, and dissolves liver stones, while celery seeds have stronger effects for the above, and furthermore, they stimulate sexual desire, increase semen, and break up or neutralize mephitic or bad body odors. Al-Rãzi advises that one should avoid eating it if he fears scorpion's sting.

Ceratonia
(*See Carob*)

Cheese (*Jubna*)

'Abdullãh bin Omar, God be pleased with him, reported that while God's Messenger ﷺ was in the city of Tabük, someone offered him cheese. God's Messenger ﷺ then asked for a knife, pronounced God's Name on the cheese, cut it, and ate from it (*Narrated by Abu Dãwoud*). The blessed companions also ate cheese during their stay in Syria and Iraq.

Unsalted and mild cheese act as a mild cathartic. It is excellent for the stomach, and easy to digest, though in general, cheese is fattening. Salted cheese offers fewer nutrients than unsalted cheese. Moreover, salted cheese is bad for the stomach, and can harm the intestines. Aged cheese and grilled cheese can promote stomach cramps, though they also benefit ulcers of the bowel, and help in stabilizing intestinal evacuations for diarrhea sufferers.

In his sahïh, Imam al-Tirmithi reported that Um Salma said: "I once offered God's Messenger ﷺ some grilled cheese and he ate it. He then went to offer his prayers without renewing his ablution." (*Reported in Al-Shamã'il*).

Cheese is cold and damp, and toasted or grilled cheese is more healthy than eating it cold, for fire balances the cheese, and brings its taste and aroma.

Aged salted cheese is hot and dry; grilling softens it, and the fire breaks down its acerbity. The high salt in cheese causes weight loss, emaciation, and can possibly cause gallstones, cystic calculus (*cystolith*), and kidney stones (*nephrolith*). Cheese with high salt content is bad for the stomach, even when eaten together with mild condiments to balance its palatability and causticity — in fact, this will make the salted cheese worse for the stomach, because such condiments will ease and hasten its passage to the stomach.

Ceylon cornel tree (*Wars*)
Memecylon tinctorium
(*See Kamala tree*)

Chicken (*Dujãj*)
(*See Meat; II Poultry*)

Chickory (*Hindiba*)
Chichorium intybus
(*See Endive*)

Citrus (*Utroj*)
Cedrat tree; Shaddock

It is reported in the correct prophetic traditions that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "The parable of a believer who reads the Qur'an regularly is like that of a citrus it has a good taste and a good fragrance" (*Reported by Imam Bukhãri*).

Cedrat is a fruit of a semitropical tree (*Citrus medica cedrata*) that resembles a yellow, coarse–grained citrus fruit known in the West Indies as shaddock.[1] This fruit has many benefits, and has four parts: 1) skin; 2) edible pulp; 3) sour citrus juice; and 4) seeds. Each of these parts has its own distinct temperament. The skin is hot and dry in the first degree. The edible pulp is hot and wet in the first degree. The juice is cold and dry, and the seeds are hot and dry.

The Skin: The skin (pith) corrects pestilence and corrupt air, kills mouth germs, eliminates bad breath, freshens the taste, stimulates the appetite, dissolves wind, and when added to spices, it helps digestion, and increases sexual desire. When placed inside a closet, citrus skin also can eliminate mothworm. Avicenna prescribed two miscal[2] of the oil extracted from this citrus skin in the preparation

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[1] Capt. Shaddock was the first to introduce this fruit from the East to the West Indies late 17th century.

[2] Miscal: Arb. *mithqãl* > measure of weight. Eastern weight measure equal to 4.68 gram.

of a special potion following the initial treatment of a snakebite. The skin itself also can be applied as poultice for burns to cool their sting, and to draw out heat and toxin. Applying the citrus skin oil is also beneficial for various skin disorders. When used as electuary, the peel is beneficial in the treatment of light sunburn, warts, and corns, and its oil can be used in manufacturing perfumes and soap.

The Juicy Edible Pulp: The cedrat fruit is beneficial for colic, it stimulates the appetite, assuages thirst, and helps gallbladder sufferers. Imam al-Ghãfiqi maintained that the cedrat fruit can benefit in the treatment of hemorrhoids.

The Citrus Juice: The cedrat juice is good for "hot stomach", it cuts diarrhoea arising from the gallbladder, eliminates all bilious diarrhea, relieves sudden agitations of the heart, and is beneficial for sufferers from jaundice (*icterus*), and sudden convulsions. Drinking the juice regularly helps strengthen the eyesight, and can prevent several diseases of the eyes. It also dissolves cholemesis, controls yellow fever, stimulates the appetite, helps digestion, lessens women's sexual drive, cures diseased hair follicles (*sycosis*), helps remedy skin rashes, eruption of pus (*impetigo*), corrects anomalous skin pigmentation, and helps in the remedy of freckles, just as it removes inkstains from clothes.

Citrus juice also relieves constipation, acts as a digestive tonic, cools biliousness of the liver, strengthens the stomach, controls the yellow bile, and is used for sore throat, and as a facial astringent. It also dispels stress, gladdens the heart, assuages thirst, and satisfies hunger.

The Seeds: The seeds are anthelmintic, i.e., they kill and eject intestinal worms, reduce fever, and balance muscular tone. The seeds also have dissolving and drying properties. Yuhanna Ibn Mãsawayh (L. Messuë, 777-857 C.E.), describes the cedrat seeds as a serum that can be used in an emergency, and which he considers as strong as an antivenin. His formula consists of one miscal of peeled seeds soaked in warm water and taken orally. It also can be cooked, or made into a paste, and it can help when applied externally to the wound caused by a snakebite. Other *tibb* physicians use two miscals of the same soaked seeds and apply the theriacum to snakebites and to scorpion bites as well. In general such theriacum can be used as a general antitoxin.

The drink of soaked peeled seeds of the cedrat fruit also kills mouth germs, eliminates bad breath, freshens the taste, and it is also used to control dental caries. Its external use soothes

inflammation, and the same properties also pertain to the skin, as we have explained earlier.

The Rind: As for the white rind, it is better not to eat it, for it is difficult to digest and can produce colic.

Clarified Butter (*Ghee; Arb. Samna; Samn*)

Clarified butter (*ghee*) from cow's milk is hot and moist in the first degree. Ghee is made from heated butter to separate the milk solids. It adds a rich texture in cooking, and has a taste that cannot be obtained if butter is used instead.

Some commentators and *ḫakïms* explain that cow milk is most healthy, and its clarified butter is a medicine. Using ghee in cooking promotes gentle bowel movement, it is a mild sedative as well, and it gradually helps reduce recurrent swellings which develop in tender or delicate bodies. Ghee is stronger than butter (*zubd*) as coctant and aperient. Galen mentioned that he used ghee to cure recurrent swelling of the ear (*otitis*), and boils on the tip of the nose (Arb. *Arnaba*).

Massaging infants' gums with ghee accelerates the growing of their teeth. Mixing ghee with honey and bitter almond clears the bronchi and lungs, expels dense and viscid gastric juices, and reverses the hostile effects of gastric fermentation. However excessive eating of ghee can harm the stomach, particularly for one who suffers from imbalance of the phlegm humor.

Drinking ghee made of cow milk or goat's milk mixed with honey acts as an antidote to poison that was swallowed, and helps against poisonous snakebites and scorpion's stings.

It is narrated in the book of Ibn al-Sinni that 'Ali, God bless his countenance, said: "People cannot find a better cure than that of ghee." (*Also see Butter; Oil*)

Clay; Mud (*Ṯeïn*)

There is not one prophetic saying that encourages people to eat earth or clay (an illness known as *geophagia*, or *geotragia*), and all such sayings which are attributed to God's Messenger ﷺ are false.

In fact, the eating of earth is a symptom of psychological disorder, characterized by a mood of disturbance and depression that can reach extremes. It is dangerous for the health, and can be fatal.

Earth is cold and dry, and it is a strong astringent. Eating earth is harmful and blocks the vessels and passages, prevents

bowel movement, and causes hemorrhaging, and ulcers in the mouth.

However, the use of clay (*illutation*) as a medical treatment is sometimes permissible for external applications only, and applying purified clay to the skin is most beneficial for a variety of illnesses and skin diseases. Galen spoke of people who suffered from splenalgia, enlargement of the spleen (*splenomegaly*), and from dropsy, and who applied Egyptian clay by overlaying a coat of such natural clay to their thighs, arms, back, or ribs, and who seemed to benefit from such therapy, also known as pelotherapy.

Costmary (*Fãghiya*)
Henna blossom
Chrysanthemum balsamita

Costmary is the Henna blossom, and it is the most fragrant of aromatic plants. Imam al-Baihaqi reported two apocryphal apostolic traditions, one being the narration reported by 'Abdullãh bnu Bareed, God blessed both his soul and that of his father, that God's messenger ﷺ said: "Henna blossom is the best of the aromatic plants in this world and in the hereafter." The second narration is attributed to Anas bin Mãlik, God blessed his soul, who is also related to have said that among all the aromatic plants, God's messenger ﷺ liked the scent of henna blossoms most (*ibid.*). However, we cannot confirm or bear witness to the authenticity of the above narrations, and we say "God knows best."

Costmary (*chrysanthemum balsamita,* Arb. *fãghiy*), is an ancient popular culinary herb of lemon-mint flavored leaves, known in Egypt, Greece, Rome and western Asia. These small flowers heads and sweet-smelling leaves are used in flavoring food, and some people wrap them in wool for their aromatic sent, and to check moths. Costmary is also used in the preparation of some ointments for hemiparalysis. Inunction of liniment containing Costmary herb helps in the treatment of thinning of the blood (*hemodilution*), simple angioma, and venectasia (*phleboctasia*), soothes the nerves, and helps in relaxing the muscles. Costmary is mild in heat and dryness, and is mildly costive.

Interestingly enough, different cultures gave the plant the name of a saint. In Italian they call it *herba di san Pietro,* in French they call it *Menthe de Notre-Dame*, and in Arabic the best of its variety, i.e., Astmary (*Balsamita sauveolens*) is called blossoms of paradise, Arb. *fãghiya-tul Jinãn*..

Costus (*Qust; Qustus; Kist*)
Costus (S); ***Kust-root*** (E)

Anas, God be pleased with him, narrated that God's messenger ﷺ said: "Some of the best treatments lie in cupping and Kist-root."[1] Um Qays, God be pleased with her, also narrated that God's messenger ﷺ said: "Use this Indian root, for it cures seven illnesses, and pleurisy is one of them," (*cf. Masnad*).

There are two kinds of Kust-roots (Arb. *Kist*): (1) the white roots of medicinal plant known as the common inula, Arb. *Rãsin Ṯibbi*; and (2) the aromatic root of Indian aloe tree (Arb. *'Oud Hindi*), commonly known as aloe. (*See Aloe vera*; Arb. *Ulwa*; *Indian Aloe wood.*

The roots of the Indian aloe provide extra heat, while the white variety is balmier, and both provide considerable medicinal effects. Kust-roots, or costus, commonly known as the Indian aloe, are hot and dry in the third degree. Both roots dry out excess phlegm, and help remedy head cold, or acute nasal congestion (*catarrh; coryza;* Arb. *zukãm*). Drinking an infusion of costus helps weakness of the liver, weakness of digestion, slackness of the stomach, stomach flu, diarrhea of the liver, and helps as an antipyretic to abate febris recurrence, quells quartan phlegmonous fever, and an ointment of it helps backache, or rheumatic pain in the lumbar region (*lumbago*). Costus roots also help pleurisy, abate its high fever, asthmatic symptoms, heaviness of the chest, and reduces thirst. These roots are also used in the preparation of antidotes (*theriaca*; Arb. *tiryãq*) in treating viper bites.

Coating the face with an inunction of costus mixed with water and honey helps to remove freckles and to control skin discoloration on the face and the chest resulting from pregnancy or malnutrition (*chloasma*). Such inunction also helps remove traces of scars, surgical or otherwise.

Galen noted that costus also can help spasmodic contractions and rigidity of voluntary muscles (*tetanus*), and is used in the treatment of pleurisy. An ointment of costus also helps to kill ringworm, and to remove dry scales shed by the skin, including dandruff.

The majority of secular physicians have failed to recognize the extensive benefits of this plant, and particularly its benefit in the treatment of pleurisy — as recognized in the traditions

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[1] Reported *in ṣaḫīḫ Muslim and ṣaḫīḫ Bukhãri.* Cf. Cauterization and Cupping, VI; Venesection and Cauterization, VII.

of God's messenger ﷺ — and had they extracted such knowledge from Galen, they would certainly have made it their bible, and they would have adopted it as the core of medicine, and similarly, had they found such knowledge inscribed in some Christian or Jewish scrolls, or in the manuscripts of some secular physicians in the West, they would undoubtedly regard it as more accurate and superior to the prophetic traditions!

We have mentioned earlier in this book that in fact, in comparison with the revealed knowledge of natural medicine practiced by God's prophets ﷺ, secular physicians are no more than practitioners of folk medicine. Based on this opinion, the medical healing arts and physical medicine, even today, may appear like superstition, although their roots are firmly connected to the laws of divine wisdom and God's infinite knowledge concerning cause and effect. In this sense, what is revealed through divine inspiration is more accurate and perfect than what is learned through experimental medicine. (*Cf. Use of Natural Remedies*).

However, although we do not deny the advantages of learning through experimentation and customs, and what such acquired knowledge can yield of negative and positive results, our opinion here is not meant to criticize, but rather to elucidate the noble virtues, worth, and facts about the prophetic guidance which is received through divine inspiration, and as a favor from GodAlmighty, and to make such guidance a proof of the prophethood of His messenger, upon whom be peace. Nevertheless, human nature remains unjust to itself, and the human investigative mind tends to experiment and learn through trial and error — with the exception of someone who is guided by the spirit of faith, his innermost knowledge, and light.

Cress Seeds (*Habbu Rashãd; Hurf*)
Garden cress; Tongue-grass
Lepidium sativum, Nasturtium

Imam Abu Hanïfa said: "Garden cress is the medical botanical described by God's Messenger ﷺ." This plant of the crucifer family is called in Arabic *hurf*. Common people also call it *rashãd*, and among others, Abu 'Ubaid called it *thufã'*.

It is reported in the *marãsïl* of Abu Dãwoud that Ibn 'Abbãss, God be pleased with him, narrated God's Messenger's ﷺ saying: "What a beneficial cure both cress seeds and aloes have in common."

The healing properties of water cress reside in its heat and dryness in the third degree. Cress seeds help eject intestinal worms,

cure scales caused by ringworm, dry up pus formation in boils, cure impetigo, abate swelling of the spleen (*splenoma*), stimulate sexual desire, and increase semen.

A poultice made of garden cress and honey abates the swelling of the spleen, and helps sufferers of enlargement of the spleen (*splenomegaly*). Cress seeds cooked with camphire[1] act as an expectorant. Drinking an infusion of garden cress helps against insect-bites, and the smoke of garden cress repels insects. Treating one's hair with juice extracted from garden cress can stop hair loss. Spreading a pomade of cress, barley stems (*epicotyledonary*), and vinegar can help remedy sciatica, and hastens abatement of inflammation of the nerve endings and hot swellings during convalescence. Applying a pomade of crushed cress seeds soaked in saltwater helps the maturation of furuncles and their possible elimination. Eating garden cress helps recover from atony, reduces muscle tension, increases appetite, helps asthma sufferers, alleviates breathing difficulties, purifies the lungs, stimulates menstrual period, reduces pain of the acetabulum, and helps sufferers of sciatica in general. Drinking a decoction of cress seeds dissolves viscous phlegm in the chest and lungs and helps their purgation, cuts short diarrhea and vomiting, and reduces bile. Drinking a decoction of five drams of cress seeds stimulates bowel movement, expels wind, and reduces nephritic colic pain. Drinking a finely ground preparation of cress seeds helps sufferers of lepra. Applying patches of cress seeds with vinegar on herpetic eruption helps their cure, and a bandage of the same reduces common headaches caused by cold. A drink of whole fried cress seeds calms one's nature because frying releases its oil. Rinsing one's head with the water of garden cress dissolves impurities and washes away viscous humidity. Galen likened the actions of cress seeds to those of mustard seeds, for both seeds require heating to bring about their healing properties, and both have similar medicinal benefits.

Crocus (*Z'afarãn Makhzanī*)
Crocus officinalis, C. Sativus
(*See Saffron*)

Cucumber (*Qitha; faqqüs*)
Snake cucumber
Cucumis sativus flexuosus

'Abdullãh bin Ja'afar, God be pleased with him, reported that God's messenger ﷺ used to eat fresh ripe dates with cucumber.[1]

[1] Camphire: i.e., a variety of henna plant

(*Reported in Bukhãri, Muslim, and Tirmithi*).

Cucumbers are cold and moist in the second degree. They assuage bilious humors, abate high stomach temperature, and have a low level of corruption during digestion. Cucumbers help abate bladder pain, their fragrance benefits fainting, their seeds increase the excretion of urine, and their leaves are used as a balm in the treatment of dogbite.

Cucumbers are slow to digest, and their cold temperament has some side effects, therefore they must be balanced to neutralize any harm they may contain, and to optimize their benefits, and that is why God's messenger ﷺ ate cucumbers with fresh ripe dates (Arb. *ratib*) which are hot and moist in the second degree. Otherwise, one can balance the effects of cucumber by eating raisins, or honey.

– D –

Dirt; Earth (*Turãb*)
(*See Clay*)

Dittender wood
Lepidium
(*See Toothpick; Siwãk*)

Dove (*Hamãm*)
(*See Meat: II Poultry*)

Dates, dried[1] (*Tamr*)

It is related in the book of correct Prophetic traditions that the father of Sa'ad bin Abi Waqqãss reported of God's Messenger ﷺ as saying: "Whoever takes seven dates for his morning breakfast will suffer from neither poison nor witchcraft for that day." (*Reported in sahih Bukhãri*)

In another narration, God's Messenger ﷺ said: "A house without dates has hungry people." It is also reported that God's Messenger ﷺ sometimes ate dates with butter, bread, or alone. Dried dates are moist in the first degree, and some say they are dry in the first degree. Eating dates cures coarseness of voice, stimulates liver functions and intestinal secretion, increases sexual potency, and particularly when eaten together with pine nuts. Such benefits

[1] Cf. XVI The Benefits of Eating Fresh Dates and Cucumbers, XVII Balancing One's Diet as a Primary Preventive Medicine.

are prominent for the dwellers of hot climates. As for the dwellers of cold climates, and particularly those who are not used to it, eating dates immoderately can cause glaring of the eyes, obstructions, arouse headache, and damage the teeth, while such adverse effects can be overcome by eating almonds and poppies.

Dates are the most wholesome food among fruits because of their hot and moist substance. Eating dates in the morning on an empty stomach kills intestinal worms and other parasites, for dates have an antidotal potency (*theriaca*), hence, when used regularly, they limit and weaken the possibility of growth of worms and parasites in the intestinal tract.

Dates are classified as food, drink, fruits, sweets, nutrients, and medicine. Cured dates are called *'ajwa* in Arabic. 'Aisha, God be pleased with her, related the saying of God's Messenger ﷺ: " 'Ajwa date is an excellent remedy" (*Reported by Bukhãri and Muslim*). In another narration he said: " 'Ajwa date is certainly an excellent and sufficient food." Dates are also a among the fruits of paradise as noted in the prophetic saying: " 'Ajwa is from paradise, and it contains an antidote against poison" (*Reported by Imam al-Tirmithi. Also see Fresh Dates; Ratib*)

Date, Fertilized Unripe Date (*Balah*)
Phoenix dactylifera (*Date palm*)

Imam al-Nisã'i and Ibn Mãja reported in their *jãmi'* that 'Aisha, God be pleased with her, narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Eat fresh and dried together, for the devil bemoans his luck when he sees the son of Adam eating them together. The devil then says: 'The son of Adam survived long enough to eat the new together with the old.' "

Muslim physicians explained that the prophetic saying provides for eating fertilized unripe dates (*balah*) together with dried , and excluded the unpollinated female dates (*busur. See Unfertilized Female Dates*). This is because fertilized unripe dates are hot and dry, whereas they are cold and moist when ripe. Hence, they balance one another. In observing the correct diet, one must not combine two hot, or two cold kinds of foods. This is the meaning of the prophet's medical advice.

Because fertilized unripe dates are cold and dry, they provide benefits for the mouth, the gums, and the stomach. However, they are unhealthy for the chest and lungs because of their rugosity, which slows down their coction, and they have fewer nutrients. For a date palm tree, fertilized unripe dates are like the sour

verjuice of the unripe fruit of a grapevine. Both cause accumulation of gases, heartburn, flatulence, insufflation, particularly when one drinks water after eating unripe dates. Halting such effects can be accomplished by eating dried dates, honey, or butter.

Dates, fresh (*Raṯib*)

Dates were the food Almighty Allah provided for Mary after she gave birth to Jesus under the palm tree. Almighty Allah inspired Jesus, her blessed infant, and His future messenger to the children of Israel, in one of the early miracles of his birth to say to her: « Shake the trunk of the palm-tree, and it will drop ripe dates on you, so eat, drink, and comfort your eyes (with what God gave you) » (*Qur'an 19:25*).

'Abdullāh bin Ja'afar reported that he saw God's Messenger ﷺ eating fresh ripe dates with cucumber (*Bukhāri and Muslim*). Sometimes he also ate a couple of fresh dates with a drink to sweeten it. However, he also used to eat a couple of fresh dates for his morning breakfast and before attending to his dawn *fajr* prayers, and when he did not find fresh dates, he ate dried ones. (*Reported in saḫīḫ Bukhāri. Cf. Dried dates*). Fresh dates are hot and moist in the second degree. They rectify the condition of a cold stomach. Eating fresh dates also stimulates sexual desire, increases semen, balances the constitution of people with cold temperament, and in general is extremely healthy and rich in benefits for the body, particularly where it is the staple fruit of the land. For those who are not used to eating it, fresh dates will break down and putrefy rapidly in the stomach, and they will generate excessive heat and boiling of the blood, causing extreme headache and imbalance of the black bile, and damaging the teeth, hence, requiring balancing and adjustment of the humors through either food of cold temperament or through purgation. Fresh dates relieve symptoms of bad temperament of the stomach caused by low caloric value in one's diet, and they relieve the condition of cold-natured substances in the stomach. They also agree with the stomach, relieve intestinal malabsorption and correct weakness of digestion, as well as rectify hot constitution of the body when combined with an oxymel or with bitter pomegranate. However, ripe dates deteriorate rapidly. Eating fresh ripe dates excessively will agitate the blood, cause headache, obstruct blood vessels, cause bladder pain, increase thirst, and damage one's teeth. On the other hand, cucumbers are cold and moist in the second degree. They quench the thirst and stimulate one's energies even by their

fragrant smell. They cool bad temperament of the stomach, and balance gastrointestinal functions, and abate fever.

As with regard to God's messenger breaking his fast on fresh dates, or dried ones, or even on water, there is of course a subtle reason for that. Since sweets travel faster to the liver and are converted more expeditiously than other nutrients, particularly if they are moist as well, the liver then accepts them more readily, and hasten their distribution to the rest of the body, which is thirsting for energy.

The bad effects of dates can also be neutralized by adding almonds and poppy seeds to one's diet. It is narrated in the traditions that 'Aisha, God be pleased with her, said: "They fed me with every type of food to gain weight, yet I did not put any on. Then they added cucumber and fresh dates to my diet and that did it."

Dates, Medina dates (*'Ajwa*)
Dehydrated dates

Sa'ad bin Abi Waqqãss, God be pleased with him, narrated that God's messenger ﷺ said: "Whoever takes seven dates for his morning breakfast will suffer from neither poison nor witchcraft for that day" (*Reported in sahih Bukhãri and sahih Muslim*).

Jãbir and Ibn Sa'id narrated that God's messenger ﷺ said: "Dates are a fruit which seed came from paradise. They are an antidote for poisoning, a rich source of increasing semen, and drinking the water of soaked Medina dates breaks the spell of witchcraft."[1]

Imam Bukhãri classified Medina dates as the wonder drug. Dates are high in sugar content. Dates are dehydrated in the sun or on their trees, and are sometimes softened with milk to help digestion, and are often ground for flour. Some of their benefits also include providing high fiber contents, and they slow down the digestive process to uniformity.

Hijãz dates of the Arabian peninsula are the best and most nutritious, as we explained about the benefits of dates earlier in this book.[2]

Date, Unfertilized Female Date (*Busur*)

It is reported in the collection of correct prophetic traditions (*sahih*) that God's Messenger ﷺ, Abu Bakr, and Omar, God be

[1] Reported by al-Nisã'i and Ibn Mãja

[2] See *'Swelling of the Heart, Benefits of Dates' XV. Also see Dried Dates, Tamr* تمر*; Fresh Dates; Ratib* رطب.

pleased with them, once visited al-Haytham bin Tayhãn who placed before them a corymb of dates. God's Messenger ﷺ asked him: "Did you select fresh dates?" Al-Haytham replied: "I wished to place it before you to choose what you like from its *Busur*, as well as from its fresh ones."

Busur is more hot than dry. Its benefits include drawing down body moisture, coating the stomach, causing a balanced flow of atrabiliary blood and phlegm — effecting constipation, when used in enemata and decoctions, it helps remedying uletic diseases, and the best are sweet and soft.

Dehydrated dates
(See Dates, Medina dates)

Dried Grapes *(Zabïb)*
(See Raisins)

Dried meat; Jerked meat *(Qadeed)*
(See Meat)

Duck, common duck *(Batt)*
Anas
(See Meat: II Fowls)

– E –

Earth *(Turãb)*
(See Clay)

Eggplant *(Bãthinjãn)*
Solanum melongena

There are several varieties of eggplant. The most common varieties of this perennial plant are the white *solanum ovigerum* (S), and the well known black aubergine, or eggplant, and both are rich in organic constituents of the soil *(humus)*, and they generate atrabiliary blood.

The Black eggplant is hot, and it can affect acedia, hemorrhoids, obturations, cancer, and lazar *(lepra)*, as well as the color of one's skin, and increase mouth odor. Cooking it with meat rectifies such effects. The white variety does not cause any of the above effects, and it rectifies all foods.

Eggs (*Baidh*)

Imam al-Baihaqi narrated in his book *shu'abul ïmãn* (Branches of Faith) a sanctioned prophetic saying that one of God's prophets once complained about general body weakness, and that God Almighty ordered him to eat eggs.

Following this tradition, we say that fresh eggs are better than old ones, and hen's eggs are the best in comparison with eggs from other birds. There is perfect balance in eggs though they incline to cool temperament. In his 'Canon of Medicine', Avicenna said: "Egg yolk (*vitelline membrane*) is hot and moist, and it helps the blood-forming organs produce healthy blood." He also said: "Eggs provide a limited but reasonable nourishment for the body, and a lightly cooked egg does not remain long enough in the stomach for full coction." Others upheld that egg yolk acts as a calmative and a pain killer, soothes the throat and the trachea, reduces roughness of the chest, and acts as a cough suppressant. Egg yolk also benefits patients suffering from tuberculosis, boils on the surface of the liver, and ulcer of the urinary bladder. Egg yolk also helps reduce hoarseness and hemorrhaging, particularly when eaten with sweet almond butter, and it also helps the maturation of chest rheum, and reduces the coarseness of voice.

In the form of eye drops, egg white (*albumen*) cools hot swelling and abates pain. Rubbing egg white on minor skin burns can prevent blisters and scarring. Egg white is also used to treat sunburns. Applying a balm of egg white mixed with frankincense (*olibanum*) to the forehead also helps in the treatment of bronchitis. Avicenna also mentioned egg yolk in the treatment of heart diseases, adding: "Though it is not the principal cure, yet it plays an important role in strengthening the heart. Egg yolk converts quickly into blood, leaves little ejecta, and furthermore it converts into light blood that is homogeneous with that of the heart, and lastly, it is among the best nourishment for preventing common illnesses that affect the basic functions of pneuma."

Egyptian chard beet (*Silq Muqalla'*)
(*See Swisschard beet*)

Endive[1]; Batavian endive; Escarole; Chicory (*Hindiba*)
Cichorium endivia

The endive plant has a mutant temperament that changes according to season. Endive is cold and moist in the winter, hot

[1] Endive, or escarole, is a frost-hardy annual or biennial leafy vegetable of the Compositae family.

and dry in the summer, and in-between during the spring and the fall, but in general, the plant tends to be cold and dry.

There are two major types of endive, the broad-leafed, and a very curly-leafed. Endives are costive, they cool the stomach and help digestion. Eating cooked endive in vinegar acts as a gastric stimulant, particularly the succory, or the wild chicory, which is a better and stronger digestive tonic, more caustive, and helps slackness of the stomach.

Chicory, a wild variety of endive, is a most effective herb for toning the liver. It opens anomalous obstructions of the liver and abates its recurrent swelling, as well as that of the stomach, and the spleen.

Applying a pomade made of wild chicory leaves cures gout,[1] and benefits cases of hot swelling of the eye, or that of the eyelid. Applying a poultice of wild chicory leaves also accelerates the healing of scorpion bites.

Endives also help open obstruction of veins and the intestines, cleanse kidney passages, and help dissolve gallstones. The best variety of endive for the liver is the most bitter. Drinking the juice of endive leaves benefits jaundice, particularly when mixed with the juice of fresh rosemary leaves, or the leaves of the frankincense plant, or those of the fennel plant. A decoction of endive or chicory leaves removes flatulence caused by vinegar and sugar.

Applying a poultice of crushed endive leaves abates general swelling symptoms, promotes discharge of the bile, and abates excess heat of the blood and that of the yellow bile.

Endives are more beneficial when eaten unwashed and unblanched, for they loose most of their potency and medicinal effects upon washing or blanching. However, endives also have antidotal characteristics that accelerates convalescence in case of food poisoning. Daubing the eyes with the water of cooked endives also helps remedy night blindness.

Endive leaves and those of wild chicory are used in various medicinal preparations. Drinking the juice of endive leaves with olive oil acts as an antidote in most cases of food poisoning, and they benefit other cases of poisoning by snakebite or the bite of a scorpion. Lastly, the milk which is extracted from the stalks of the endive plant clarifies the eyes, and relieves their redness.

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[1] Gout: *Arthrolithiasis*, Arb. *Naqras*: A hereditary form of arthritis resulting from disturbance of uric acid in the blood.

Escarole (*Hindiba*)
(*See Endive*)

Essence of the Palm Tree (*Jummãr*)
(*See Palm-marrow*)

Euphorbia (*Shubrom*; *Shurunb*)
Euphorbia pithyusa
White petty spurge

Asmã' Bint 'Umays reported that God's Messenger ﷺ in reply to one of her questions said: "What do you use for purgative?" She replied: "I use Euphorbia (*euphorbiales*) as a cathartic and an aperient." He replied: "It is too hot and strong. I myself use senna seeds." (*Reported by Imam al-Tirmithi and Ibn Mãja*)[1]

Euphorbia plants are species of small shrubs and small trees of the spurge family (*Euphorbiaceae*). The plant can grow up to six feet in tropical and warm regions, and it contains an extremely poisonous and dangerous drug.

The stems of the Euphorbia tree are red and brightened with white. The petallike leaves form a cuplike cluster at the tip of their stalks. The yellowish-white petals are small, and when they fall, they leave behind them small filaments holding a knoblike anther, carrying tiny red seeds that resemble the fruit of a miniature terebinth tree. These tiny red seeds are enveloped within thin protective coats. These thin red coats that protects the veins are used for medicinal purposes as well as the milky white sap produced by the stems.

The Euphorbia seeds are hot and dry in the fourth degree. They help detoxification of the black bile, set the flow of phlegm and the atrabiliary blood, and help purge thick gastric juices and excess unripened yellow bile.

Euphorbia is used as a cathartic or a laxative drug to stimulate the passage and elimination of feces. Euphorbia is a strong laxative: it increases the propulsive activity of the intestines by local irritation of the mucous membranes, and promotes softening of the fecal mass to aid purgation.

When using euphorbia as a laxative or a lubricant, the seeds must be soaked in milk for twenty four hours, and the milk must be drained out and replaced two to three times. The seeds are then removed and dried in the shade, and then are mixed with several kinds of crushed roses and taken as a drink mixed with

[1] Cf. Dryness of Temperaments and Nature's Need To Balance Them.

honey-sweetened water, or with grape juice. The mixture should contain no more than one to two *dãniq* (pl. *dawãniq*) — i.e., 1.04 to 2.08 grams — depending on the needed potency.

As medicine, euphorbia has an unpleasant and a nauseating taste, and an overdose can be dangerous and even lethal. That is why most herbalists have stopped using or prescribing it. Hunayn spoke of it, saying: "As for Euphorbia milk, it is dangerous, and folk *tibb* apothecarists have killed many people by prescribing it."

Ewe (*Na'aja*)
(*See Meat*)

– F –

Fasting (*Sawm*)

Fasting, or imposition of complete abstinence from food, is the best safeguard for the illnesses of the soul, the heart, the mind, and the body, and its benefits cannot be enumerated. Dietary fasting produces wondrous results in preventive medicine, and in softening and dissolving humoral excesses (*plethora*) which become obstructions the intestines cannot absorb, or which the body does not expel easily. Dietary fasting also helps control excessive desire for food and harmful substances, and such control helps to balance excessive desire (Arb. *nafs*) for food.

Fasting is best when observed in moderation, and in interrupted sequences, and is best when religiously required—that is, during the obligatory fasting of the lunar month of Ramadan. The body's need for such periodic complete imposition of abstinence from food (*nestitherapy*) is most natural and innate. Moreover, fasting helps adjust, moderate, and preserve humoral balance and muscular strength. Among its ancillary assets, fasting promotes the joy of the heart, both in this world and in the hereafter.

Fasting causes diseases to stand still, helps people of cold and moist temperaments, and produces extremely impressive results in health preservation. Fasting comes in the categories of spiritual medicine (*psychotherapy* < Gr. *psychichos*, of the soul, breath, spirit; Arb. *adwiya rūhāniyya*), and natural medicine (*naturopathy;* Arb. *adwiya tabī'iyya*).

Complete fasting (*limotherapy*), is one of the best treatments for most illnesses relating to excess food consumption, acute gastrointestinal obstructions, or severe constipation (*obstipation*), and it is better than immediate treatment with purgatives. (*Cf. Use of Natural Remedies*).

When a person who is fasting adheres correctly to the natural and spiritual requirements of abstinence, his heart rejoices and benefits greatly, and his abstinence will prevent access to adulterated, unnatural, easily corruptive foods, and indigestible foods. Hence, such temporary abstinence from food can eliminate gastrointestinal obstructions, and adjust humoral imbalance, among other benefits, all depending on the quality and correctness of one's fast. (*Cf. Imposition of Abstinence*).

As for the spiritual benefits, fasting also protects the believer from evil, guides his heart to avoid possible trespassing, balances his mind, and helps him better perform other religious obligations, including observing supererogatory prayers (Arb. *nafl*), and reading the Qur'an and having a better understanding of it, among other benefits of nocturnal worship.

God Almighty says:❮ O believers, fasting is ordained for you as it was ordained for people before you as your expression of piety ❯ (*Qur'an 2:183*). He also says:❮ It is better for you (to fast)❯ (*Qur'an 2:184*). God's messenger ﷺ said: "Fasting is a shield of protection" — i.e., fasting is an act of piety, and piety is a most beautiful devotion that brings the servant to the nearness of his Lord, and envelopes him in divine protection.

Hence, fasting is a diet of great benefits, and is intended to bring one's heart and total dependence before God Almighty, which act appeases the heart, the soul, the body, and the mind, and it educates them in love and obedience to their Lord and Creator. We spoke of other benefits of fasting in earlier chapters. (*See Index*)

Fat (*Duhn*)
(*See Oil; Suet: Arb. Shahm*)

Fatted Calf
Fattened Calf
(*See Broiled Calf; Mashwi*)

Fennel flower (*Shoneez zirã'ï*)
Nigella sativa
(*See Black seed*)

Fenugreek (*Hulba*)
Trigonella Fœnum-graecum

It is related in the collection of correct prophetic traditions that God's Messenger ﷺ visited his blessed companion Sa'ad bin Abi Waqqãss who contracted an illness during his stay in Mecca,

and God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Ask a physician to examine him," and they called al-Ḫārith bin Kaldah who diagnosed his condition and said: "He will be fine. Give him the soup of a decoction of dates and fenugreek." The family did so, and Sa'ad soon recovered from his illness.

Some herbal therapists (*ḫakīms*) have said: "If people knew the benefits of fenugreek, they would pay its weight in gold." Although this dictum is reported in *al-Wasīla* and is incorrectly attributed to God's Messenger ﷺ, nevertheless, in conjunction with the above correct prophetic saying, it still has its merits.

Fenugreek[1] is a leguminous herb which is hot in the second degree and dry in the first. Drinking a decoction of fenugreek seeds soothes sore throat, clears the respiratory tract of congested phlegm, calms tussiculation, helps asthma, bronchitis, tuberculosis, wheezing, and breathing difficulty, and for such bronchial conditions, fenugreek is sometimes helpful when eaten with ghee and saccharified extract of licorice root (*pénid*). Drinking a decoction of fenugreek also helps colic, hemorrhoids, and serves as a mild aperient.

Fenugreek also reduces pain caused by venereal lymphogranulomatosis (*bubonalgia*), relieves upset stomach by decreasing agitated gastric juices in the intestines, releases suppressed menses, and increases sexual desire. Fenugreek is sometimes used for sour enemas, and if a woman takes a hot bath in a solution of cooked fenugreek, it relieves infrequent pain in the pubic area brought about by swelling of the womb. Drinking an infusion of fenugreek mixed with five drams of extract from the stump of the madder plant (*Rubia tictoria*)[2] stimulates menstrual period, and increases excretion of urine. Washing one's hair with a solution of cooked fenugreek creases it and sometimes frizzes it. Fenugreek also cures papules and enlarged skin markings (*lichens*). A poultice of fenugreek flour mixed with vinegar and niter or saltpetre (*potassium nitrate*) contracts swelling of the spleen (*splenoma*). Applying a hot poultice of cooked fenugreek flour to furuncles, skin eruptions, or hardened cold sores soothes and softens them, and can possibly dissolve them. Drinking an infusion of fenugreek works as an astringent and a costive, expels winds, and lubricates the intestines. A decoction of fenugreek is also a cordial and it strengthens the heart.

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[1] Fenugreek: The Trigonella plant contains %7 oily material; %30 albuminous material, a nutritive protein substance which helps increase the flow of breast milk. The most commonly known variety is the fenugreek.

[2] Juice of rhizomes of the Dyer's madder.

Cooking fenugreek with dates, or honey, and figs and eating them on an empty stomach in the morning dissolves viscous phlegm in the chest and the stomach, and relieves whooping cough. Fenugreek also relieves constipation and retention of urine. Applying an unguent of fenugreek to bruised nails heals them. An ointment of fenugreek oil mixed with wax can remedy cracking nails. Other uses of fenugreek include treatment of fever, neuralgia, sciatica, swollen glands, wounds, tumors, and emphysema. In fact, the benefits of fenugreek are manifold, and al-Qãsim bin 'Abdu-Rahmãn narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Mix fenugreek in your medicines."

Fig (*Tïn*)
Ficus carica

Figs are not a common fruit of the Hijãz or Medina (*Arabian Peninsula*), for its soil is incompatible with that which is suitable for palm trees, hence, there are no prophetic comments regarding figs. However, God Almighty mentions them in the holy Qur'an to identify their distinct health benefits among fruits.

Figs are hot, and there are conflicting views in reference to their moisture and dryness. Nevertheless, there are several varieties of figs, and the best of figs is the white variety,[1] and they must be ripe and peeled before eating them. Eating fresh figs prevents development of urotoxicity, helps expel urinary sediments, and dissolves sandy sediments which can develop into kidney stones. Figs provide the greatest nourishment of all fruits, and fresh figs are healthier and more wholesome than dried ones. Eating figs cures coarseness of voice, benefits the lungs and the trachea, rejuvenates the liver and the spleen, depurates the phlegm humor in the stomach, and is a superior aliment for the entire body. However, eating figs excessively promotes pediculosis. Figs also act as a laxative, a diuretic, and they open obstructions, and assuage thirst which is due to saline phlegm.

It is reported that Abi-Dardã' once presented God's Messenger ﷺ with a plate of fresh figs, who in turn invited everyone to eat, and said: "If I had to mention a fruit that descended from paradise, I would say this is it, because paradisiacal fruits do not have pits." He then added: "Eat from this fruit, for it prevents hemorrhoids, cures piles and helps gout (*Arthrolithiasis*)."

Dried figs are a good aliment for the body. They benefit the nerves, open the alimentary tract, and it is best to eat them with

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[1] Figs contain sucrose 50-58%, 5% protein, 1% sebaceous material, 5% cellulose, 2-3% vegetable ashes, 8% starch, and 17-24% water.

walnuts and almonds. Galen adds that eating dried figs together with walnuts and wild rue can avert food poisoning. Dried figs also help a chronic cough, agree with the liver and spleen, and eating them with walnuts and almonds in the morning on an empty stomach is also most beneficial. However, eating it with coarse meals is unhealthy. The closest fruit to fig regarding the above benefits is the white mulberry, though it has less nutritional value and can be insalubrious to the stomach.

Fish (*Samak*)

Sperm whale

'Abdullāh bin Omar, God be pleased with him and with his father, narrated that God's messenger ﷺ said: "There are two kinds of dead creatures[1] whose flesh is lawful for us as food, and there are two kinds of blood-bearing organs we are permitted to eat: (1) fish and locusts, and (2) liver and spleen" (*Reported by Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, and in Sunan Ibn Māja*). Otherwise, carrion, or the decaying flesh of dead animals, or that of dead birds, is forbidden to Muslims as food.

There are many varieties and species of fish, and the best are those of medium size. In selecting fish for food, one must find those of agreeable taste, fresh smell, thin skin, tender flesh and not the hard or the dried ones, and those that feed on plants and not on mud. The best of such varieties are found in fresh water. They live in rocky or sandy habitat, in running rivers and not in stagnant water, their water is clean and not polluted or murky. They live in fresh and cool water, not turbulent, warm, or hot water, and their environment is well exposed to the sunlight and the wind.

Ocean fish are abundant, tasty, and fine. Some among the varieties of tender flesh are cold and moist, yet they are difficult to digest, and they generate excess phlegm. Some fish that live in fresh waters, including rivers and lakes, balance hot humors, improve fertility, and uberty and increase the production of semen.

On the other hand, the best of salt fish are those of the early stage of salting. They are hot and dry, and the older is their salting, the more hot and dry is their temperament. Among their variety is the sheatfish (*Silurus glanis*; Arb. *jariy*; or *silurid*, Arb. *sallour*), a variety of silurid catfish that is abundant in Eastern rivers as well as in European ones, such as the Euphrates, the Danube, and the Volga rive. Jews do not eat this variety. Fresh catfish of tender

[1] i.e., not requiring sacrifice, Arb. *Thabīha*.

flesh effect bowel movement and act as a mild aperient, while eating salted and aged catfish clears the bronchi, helps the throat, and clears the voice.

Applying powdered salted catfish to the skin helps extract watery fluids and residues from under the skin, for it has such property of suction. Mixing the above powder in food helps expels tread worms (*trichocephalus*). Sitting in a basin filled with a decoction of catfish powder helps sufferers of stomach ulcer in the early stages of their illness, and helps in drawing deleterious substances of the illness to the surface of the body. Administering an enema of the above decoction heals sciatica.

The best part of a fish is situated in its posterior section, while both the meat and buccelation of fat and tender fish increase sexual desire and the production of semen.

Jãbir bin ‘Abdullãh, God be pleased with him, said: “God's messenger ﷺ once sent us on a fact-finding mission, and we were three hundred horsemen, and our leader (Arb. *amir*) was Abu ‘Ubaida al-Jarrãh, God be pleased with him. By the time we reached the seaside, we felt extremely hungry until we were forced to eat some fallen dried leaves we found on the way. Suddenly, by God's leave, the sea threw us a large dead sperm whale[1] (Arb. *‘Anbar*). We ate from its meat for two weeks and we used its fat for condiment until our bodies recovered. Abu ‘Ubaida measured the whale's ribs by letting one of the companions ride on his horse and pass under it.”[2]

Flossing (*Khalãl*)

Despite conflicting records of prophetic traditions attributed to God's Messenger ﷺ, flossing helps in removing food particles from between the teeth. It removes plaque from unexposed tooth surfaces, strengthens the gums by removing tartar, and together with regular teeth cleaning with *miswãk*, flossing helps in maintaining oral hygiene, prevents the possible development of foul breath (*halitosis*), and refreshes the taste.

Flossing is best when using a branch of an unpollinated female date tree (*busur*), a milfoil tree, an olive tree, or a Zakkoum-oil tree (*elaeagnus angustifolia*), among others. On the other hand, it is unhealthy and perhaps harmful to one's gums to floss one's teeth with a stick of common reed because of their pellicles, or to use a stick of myrtle, of stinking ground pine (*camphorosma*), or of common basil. (*Also see Toothpick*)

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[1] *‘Anbar*: A large species of whale (*Physeter catodon*) inhabiting warm seas. See Ambergris.
[2] Reported in sahih Bukhãri and sahih Muslim

Francolin; Common francolin (*Durãj*)
Francolinus; Genus partridge
(*See Meat: II-Poultry*)

Frankincense (*Lubãn; Lubãn Hindi; Kundur*)
Boswellia serrata; Olibanum

Prophetic traditions report that a man complained to God's messenger ﷺ about forgetfulness (*lacunar amnesia*), and was advised: "Use frankincense, for it invigorates the heart with courage, and it is a remedy for forgetfulness."

It is also reported that Ibn 'Abbãss, God be pleased with him, drank a mixture of powdered frankincense and sugar on an empty stomach.

Frankincense is a diuretic and is a remedy for weak memory. Someone complained to Anas, God be pleased with him, about a weak memory, and Anas replied: "Soak frankincense (*olibanum extract*) overnight in water, and drink the solution in the morning on an empty stomach, for it benefits the memory."

The above prescription has a simple and clear explanation: simple amnesia, or weak memory of past experiences, events, or words, results from a corrupt humor, affecting different parts of the brain, causing ill-disposition, caused by cold and damp temperaments. This condition produces defective memory, and blocks the brain's natural ability to retain messages in sequence, or to store information. Frankincense, which contains the opposite attributes, helps to balance the humors, and therefore, removes the aforementioned blockage. Mild amnesia, or inability to remember isolated events or words, is due to dryness and can be overcome simply by drinking extra fluids, or taking damp-producing remedies.

The difference between simple amnesia and retrograde amnesia, is that the latter involves impaired memory of past experiences due to a shock, or unnecessary or excessive use of cupping[1] on the vertex of the skull, which is the site of memorization, or getting addicted to eating green ramping fumitory (*Fumaria*; Arb. *Kusfara*), excessive eating of sour apples, indulgence in grief, staring at stagnant water after urinating in it, or staring at a person that has been put to death, or staring at a mutilated body, or a dying person, fascination with reading the inscriptions on gravestones, walking between two camels tied head to tail in a caravan, infestation with head lice, and finally, eating food which has been chewed by a mouse.

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[1] Cf. Benefits of Cupping; Points of Application.

Most of such conclusions are learned from experience and through observation. However, frankincense is a calefacient in the second degree, and a desiccative in the first degree. It also has mild costive properties, provides numerous benefits, and has insignificant negative effects.

Among the benefits of frankincense: it aids in the treatment of tuberculosis, hemorrhagia, stomachache, and diarrhea, and it helps the digestion, expels wind, relieves eye sores and infections, refreshes the eyes, causes new tissue to grow in an ulcer when used as a plaster, dries up phlegm, and prevents malignant ulcers from spreading, and when chewed with Persian thyme, it generates phlegm, helps speech impediment (tongue-tie), and increases the memory. Burning frankincense perfumes the air and increases the body's resistance during the time of pestilence or plague.

Frog[1] (Dhifdha'a)
Rana

Imam Ahmad said: "It is not permissible to use frogs in medicine. God's Messenger ﷺ forbade killing them." This tradition was reported as the narration of 'Uthmãn bin 'Abdu-Rahmãn, God be pleased with him, when an Arab physician (*hakïm*) spoke of the use of frog flesh in medicine. (*Reported in Masnad Imam Ahmad*) The same narration is reported in *sunan* al-Nisã'i, where it is reported that an Arab physician mentioned the use of a frog in medicinal preparations, and God's Messenger ﷺ forbade killing it for such a purpose. Abu Huraira reported that God's Messenger ﷺ forbade the use of cacoethic medicines.

Killing frogs for medicine or for food is unlawful, and several of their species are even poisonous. Avicenna also spoke of frogs, saying: "Eating the flesh or the blood of frogs causes swelling of the body, changes (or dulls) the color of the skin, ruins one's semen, and can cause involuntary and regular passage of semen until one dies. Hence physicians have abandoned the use of frog flesh in medicine."

Frogs are common, long-lived anurans known for their loud, raucous croaking, and there are two kinds: (1) some are amphibious; and (2) others live only on land. Frogs eat snakes, fish, and other frogs as well. It is the land frogs that are poisonous. Nevertheless, frog legs are considered a delicacy in some countries, but they require special preparation, and if not well cooked, people often feel chest pain, and burning sensation, among other discomforts, after eating them.

[1] Cf. *Interdiction of Prescribing What Is Deemed Impure.*

Fruit of Aloe (*Kabãth*)

Jãbir bin 'Abdullãh, God be pleased with him, once said: "We were harvesting ripened fruit of Aloes with God's messenger ﷺ and he said: 'Take particularly the black variety, for it is the best.' " (*Reported by Bukhãri and Muslim*).

Kabãth is the ripened fruit of Aloe (Arb. *arãk*), while its unripened fruit is called in Arabic *al-barïr*. The Aloe fruit is one of the desert plants indigenous to the Arabian peninsula. Aloe fruit is hot and dry, and it contains all the benefits of the Aloe plant: it strengthens the stomach, helps digestion, dissolves phlegm, acts as a painkiller (*analgesic*) for back ache, and it strengthens and adds to the benefits of several medicines.

Ibn Jaljal contended that drinking a solution of powdered Aloe increases the excretion of urine and cures certain conditions of retention of urine, and cleanses the urinary bladder, while Ibn Radhwãn added that Aloe fruit strengthens the stomach and arrests diarrhea.

Fungiform (*Kam'a*)
Ascomycetous fungi
(*See Truffle*)

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Garden cress
Lepidium sativum, Nasturtium
(*See Cress Seeds Hurf*)

Garlic (*Thüm*)[1]
Allium sativum; Porrum sativum

It is reported in the collection of correct prophetic traditions (*sahïh*) that someone offered God's Messenger ﷺ a dish containing garlic. In turn, God's Messenger ﷺ sent it to Abu Ayyoub al-Ansãrï who expressed himself by saying: "O Messenger of God, if you hate it, then why would you send it to me?" God's Messenger ﷺ replied: "I confide in Him in Whom you do not confide." In a tradition reported by Imam al-Bukhãri, Anas narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Whoever eats of this plant must not go near our mosques." In another tradition, 'Ali, God bless his countenance, said: "God's prophet ﷺ advised against eating garlic except when cooked."

[1] Garlic is used for food flavoring, and as a germicide, since its juice contains the antibiotic oil Allicin.

Garlic is a bulbous herb of the lily family, and it is hot and dry in the fourth degree. Garlic intensifies body heat and dryness, and it can be eaten raw, cooked, grilled, or roasted. Eating garlic is beneficial for sufferers from cold symptoms, and for someone who brooks intemperate phlegmatic humor. Garlic helps prevent hemiplegia and palsy for someone who is about to be visited with such illness. Eating garlic dries up semen, opens obstructions, assuages thirst, dissolves wind, aids excretion of urine (*uragogue*), promotes bowel movement, relieves cold pains, and acts as theriacum for all kinds of bites and cold sores. A plaster of garlic is beneficial for snakebite, scorpion's stings, and bee's sting, and helps to draw out their poison. Garlic also increases the body's natural temperature, cuts phlegm, reduces abdominal bloating, clears the throat, and is most hygienic. Eating garlic also helps flush body-water, and aids chronic cough. Garlic also helps chest pain affected by cold symptoms, and it removes mucus from the throat.

Daubing a decaying tooth with an ointment made of crushed garlic, vinegar, salt, and honey eases its disintegration, and breaks it into fragments. Placing such ointment on an aching tooth also will relieve pain. Crushing two drams of garlic and drinking it with sweetened water clears phlegm from the throat and expels worms and other parasites from the intestinal tract. Spreading a mixture of crushed garlic and honey over herpetic eruptions accelerates their cure.

However, excessive eating of garlic can also cause headache, damage the brain, weaken the vision, weaken sexual desire, dry up semen, arouse thirst, precipitate discharge of yellow bile, and generate bad breath, while chewing rue leaves after eating garlic eliminates such foul breath. (*Also see Wild-leek*)

Ghee (*Purified Butter*)
(*See Purified Butter*)

Ginger (*Zanjabīl*)
Zingiber

Speaking of the comforts that the believers will cherish in paradise, Almighty Allah says: ❮ And in it, their drink is mixed with ginger❯ (*Qur'an 76:17*).

Abi Sa'īd al-Khidri said: "The Byzantine emperor once sent a jar of pickled ginger to God's messenger ﷺ as a gift, and God's messenger ﷺ gave each one of his companions a piece of it, and he gave me a piece too" (*cf. Abu Na'īm in his book 'Medicine of the Prophet'*).

Ginger is hot in the second degree and moist in the first. Ginger generates body heat (*calefacient*), is a mild purgative, helps digestion, and relieves occasional obstruction of the liver brought about by cold or dampness. Eating ginger or applying it to the eyelids relieves recurrent temporary loss of sight which is a form of glaucoma and is caused by dampness that settles in the pupil of the eye. Ginger also dissolves and expels dense gases when they originate in the intestines or in the stomach, thickens the body's fluids, renders the extract of the medicinal Turbeth plant[1] more effective in the treatment of fluid retention in the body (*edema*). A confection of ginger also soothes the stomach, and provides elderly people with energy and strength. Drinking a hot solution of two drams of ginger sweetened with sugar reduces the stickiness of blood platelets, and helps some patients whose blood clots too readily. Ginger is corrective to nauseous medicines, and is used in the treatment of various kinds of fatty, acid, fermented, or putrefacted indigestion (*dyspepsia*), and flatulent colic, and helps chronic bronchitis. Ginger also helps dissolves viscous mucus, promotes secretion of saliva, and helps purging viscous saliva among other mucilaginous substances.

In essence, ginger benefits the liver and the stomach of cold temperament. Sour or acidulous ginger is hot and dry, it increases the production of semen, stimulates sexual desire (*aphrodisiac*), eases absorption of nutrients, agrees with the cold temperament of the liver and the stomach, and dispels occasional dampness of the stomach which is produced by eating fruits, and ginger refreshes the breath, and balances cold and hard to digest food, among other benefits. God knows best.

Ginger grass (*Ithkher Makki*; *Halfā' Makka*; *Sunbol Hindi*; *Teeb Ma'mouni*)
Andropogon nardus; Bog-rush

It is reported in the collection of correct prophetic traditions that God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Everything in Mecca is sacred, and its sanctity must not be violated." Al-'Abbāss, God be pleased with him, then said: "O Messenger of God, make exception of the Meccans' ginger grass (*Athkhar Makki*), for people use it in their homes!" God's Messenger ﷺ then added: "Except for the ginger grass." (*Cf. Perfume*)

The most common scent of Arabia is Ginger grass (*Teeb-ul 'Arab: al-Ithkher*), and it is very pungent. Ginger grass is a plant

[1] Arb. *turbod* > *athmān turbod*; S. *ipomaea turpethum.*

that grows in hot climates. It is mostly cultivated for its aromatic rhizome, and is used in medicinal preparations, perfumes, and as a condiment. Its temperament is hot in the second degree, and dry in the first. Ginger grass is an emollient, a mild diuretic, rubefacient, stomachic, it improves venous circulation, helps in vascular obstructions, stimulates menstrual flow, eliminates abnormal stony deposits in the bladder (*lithotrity*), dissolves cold swellings in the stomach, liver, and kidney, and can be taken orally as a drink, or used externally as a salve. Ginger root corrects nausea, and is used in the treatment of atonic dyspepsia, gastritis, and for strengthening the maxillary bones.

Goat (*Al-Mã'iz*)
Ovis capra
(*See Meat*)

Gold (*Thahab*)

Abu Dãwoud and Imam al-Tirmithi narrated that 'Ajrafa bin As'ad had lost his nose during the battle of *al-Kilãb*, and he covered the area with a paper nose which later developed a serious infection. God's messenger ﷺ then advised him to use gold as the main ingredient in making an artificial nose, and he did.

Gold is the ornament of this world and a mystery in this life, and it is a secret God Almighty gave the earth. Gold brings joy to the heart, strengthens it, carries reassurance, and is one of His countless wonders in this world. God's messenger ﷺ prohibited men from wearing gold except when using it for medicinal purposes. Gold is evenly balanced, and its humor agrees with most of the elements. It strengthens the heart, contains a delicate heat that complements most simple electuaries,[1] it arouses sexual desire (*aphrodisiac*), and it is a carminative. The prohibition against wearing gold for men has much to do with the negative chemical reaction and steric hindrance it produces in males, and subsequently, its harm is greater than its benefits (*cf. X Wearing Silk*).

Gold is one of the densest metals and has a high degree of ductility and malleability. Gold does not tarnish in the air, water, or in the ground, and it retains its luster. Gold is not attacked by most acids although it dissolves in one acid called aqua regia. When gold is mixed in medicines, it helps weak heart conditions, and is used for cases of spontaneous trembling of the limbs, caused

[1] Electuary (Arb. *Ma'ajoon*): A confection made by mixing hemp leaves, henbane, datura seeds, poppy seeds, and ghee with honey or syrup to form a paste, which produces effects similar to a sedative.

by imbalance of the black bile. Gold also helps reduce the effects of psychological stress, anxiety, paranoia, delirium, mental disorder, nervous disorder, melancholia, fear, and falling in love. Gold promotes weight gain, strengthens the muscles, reduces biliousness and paleness of the face, and benefits in the treatment of leprosy. Gold helps relieve most kinds of pain and illnesses caused by the black bile. Gold is also used as a main ingredient in the treatment of fox mange (*alopecia areata*), a condition of abnormal spot baldness and rapid hair loss, for which it can be taken orally as a drink, or applied externally. Gold also clears the eyes and strengthens the vision, and helps in the treatment of several kinds of eye diseases. Placing and holding gold or gold leaf in one's mouth eliminates severe cases of bad breath (*oxostomia*). When used as a cautery, the wounds do not blister, and it helps in accelerating their healing. When gold is pulverized and is used as kohl on the eyelids, it strengthens the eyesight, clears the vision, relieves allergic conditions of the eyes, redness, and congested or swollen eye membranes.

Gold also has a great psychological impact in strengthening one's will and determination. It is the idol of the mind. Once it captures someone's attention, it distracts it from anything else. God's messenger ﷺ said: "If the son of Adam had a mountain of gold, he would desire to have a second, and if he had two mountains of gold, he would desire to have a third. In the end, however, nothing fills the mouth of the son of Adam (and keeps him silent) except dirt (in his grave), and Allah turns in mercy towards whoever repents, and He forgives whomsoever He pleases."

In fact gold is a great barrier between the creation and its reaching the ultimate success on the day of judgment, and gold is the strongest cause of disobedience to one's Lord. Because of it, family ties are broken, bloodshed erupts, women are raped, murders are committed, rights are violated, tyranny and oppression reign over people, and because of it, truth is sometimes regarded as falsehood, and falsehood regarded as truth, aggression is committed against the innocent ones, and brotherhood turned into enmity. Gold is the foremost desired object in this world, and on the day of judgement it is the object most abhorred and despised by those who loved it in the world. On the other hand, gold is one of the rewards believers will receive in paradise, because they renounced, despised, and abhorred it in the world.

Goose (*Aouz*)
(*See Meat: II Fowls*)

Gourd; Pumpkin; Bottle-gourd (*Yaqṯīn*; *Quar'*; *Dubã'*)
Lagenaria vulgaris; Cucurbita

Almighty Allah mentions the gourd plant in the holy Qur'an, when He speaks of His blessed prophet Jonah, upon whom be peace, saying: ❮ And We caused a tree of gourd to grow for him ❯ (*Qur'an 37:146*).

Gourds are a large and diverse group of plants related to pumpkin[1] and squash, and they bear broad, rough leaves. Gourds are grown for their fruits, which occur in a great variety of sizes, shapes, and colors. Gourds' seeds are planted directly in the soil in groups called hills, and the plants are harvested when the fruits are mature and their skin is hard.

The plant mentioned in the holy Qur'an is the bottle-gourd (*Lagenaria vulgaris*), also called the Calabash cucumber.

Anas bin Mãlik, God be pleased with him, narrated that a tailor invited God's messenger ﷺ to partake of a meal, and he offered him barley bread besides a dish made with squash, or bottle-gourd (*Dubã'*) and dried meat (*cf. Jerked meat; Arb. Qadeed*). Anas added: "I saw God's messenger ﷺ wiping off the plate and savoring the squash, and since then, I have always loved this squash." (*Reported in sahīh Bukhãri & sahīh Muslim*).

Abu Ṯãlüt said: "I visited Anas bin Mãlik, God be pleased with him, and he was partaking of a meal of cooked pumpkin, and he was saying: 'What a blessed plant I love, because of God's messenger's love for it.' "

'Aisha, God be pleased with her, narrated that God's messenger ﷺ said to her: "When you cook mixed vegetables with meat, add more bottle-gourd in it, for it is a tonic that revitalizes a sad heart." (*Reported in al-Ghalãniyyãt by Hishãm bin 'Urwa*).

Gourd is cold and moist in the second degree. It provides moderate nutritional value, rectifies the humors, and it digests quickly if not corrupted by other ingredients that can spoil it during digestion. One of gourd's beneficial characteristics is that it agrees with most food, hence, if mustard is in the mixture, it generates a corresponding astringent or exacting humor. If salt is added, it generates a corresponding preventive, drying, and salt-detoxifying humor, and when cooked with a costive ingredient,

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[1] Pumpkin is a name commonly given to fruit of the genus *Cucurbita* of the gourd family, *Cucurbitaceae*. The gourdlike orange fruit has a smooth, thick, slightly furrowed rind. The name squash is often interchanged with that of pumpkin. Most varieties known as pumpkin bear an orange fruit, and have very long vines and stems that are firmer, more rigid, and squarer than those of other squashes.

it also becomes costive, and likewise, if gourd is cooked with quince, it becomes highly nutritious.

Gourd is mild, produces moisture, and generates phlegm. The plant particularly benefits people of hot temperament, and does not agree with those of cold temperament, or people effected by intemperament of the phlegm humor.

Its water assuages thirst, cures headache caused by fever, and acts as an aperient no matter how it is applied, and no other food is faster in producing its benefits. People suffering from fever must not eat pumpkin, or gourd, otherwise.

Basting a dough heavily with a paste of cooked gourd, or pumpkin, while baking it, and adding a mild cathartic supplement to one's meal, or taking a soft drink along with it, abates high fever, assuages thirst, and provides excellent nutrition.

Drinking gourd juice mixed with manna (Arb. *turunjubeen*) and a marmalade of quince helps purgation of elements affecting corrupt yellow bile, and balances the intemperament of bilious humors. Drinking the juice of cooked gourd mixed with honey and a dash of sodium nitrate[1] helps the purgation of corrupted phlegm and bile.

Applying a pomade of gourd over the fontanel, or the bregma, abates hot swelling of the brain. Applying the extracted juice of gourd's hard skin and mixing it with rose water, then using it as eardrops abates swelling of the ear. The juice of gourd's skin also helps in the treatment of swelling of the eye, and gout.

As we have stated earlier, when gourd meets some corrupt food in the stomach, it also becomes corrupt, and generates a parallel temperament. To reduce such effects, one can add vinegar and chondrilla (Arb. *khandaweel*), or gum succory (Arb. pl. *murriy, singl. murrairah*).

Grapes (*'Inab*)

Table grapes; wine berries

God Almighty mentions grapes six times in the Qur'an, as one of the innumerable favors He bestowed upon His creation, and which is the fruit of this world as well as of paradise. Prophetic traditions also report that God's messenger ﷺ loved grapes and melons.

Grapes are rich in nutrients, and are eaten fresh, dried, green, and ripe. Table grapes are the variety described in this section,

[1] Niter: native soda, natron, Also see Grapevine.

to distinguish them from wine grapes. Grapes can be classified as a fruit, food, a condiment, a drink, and a medicine. Botanically, grapes are classified as berries. Domesticated grapes grow in clusters, and they range in color from pale green to black. Green grapes are the sweetest when the color has a yellowish cast, and they are more nutritious than the black variety, even if they are equally sweet.

The temperament of grapes is hot and moist. The best are the plump ones in compact clusters. It is better and more nutritious to eat grapes two or three days old than those harvested on the same day, for the latter can cause flatulence and gas in the stomach and the intestines, and they are better kept until the skin becomes soft.

The nutritional benefits of table grapes are similar to those of figs and raisins. Grapes increase body tone, and seedless grapes act as a gentle purgative. Excessive eating of grapes causes headache, and can be remedied by eating bitter pomegranate. Grapes also help increase weight, and are one of the three royal fruits, namely: grapes, fresh dates, and figs.

Grapevine (*Karm*)
Vine plant; Creeping plant (*Habla*)

The vine plant (*vinifera*) has long, thin stems that grow along the ground, and sometimes climb a trellis using its tendrils. The plant is otherwise known in Arabic as 'the climbing rope,' or creeping plant, and its fruit grows in clusters, and is rich in nutrients. In fact, the grapevine tree (Arb. *karm*), or vineyard tree, is a symbol of richness, generosity, and wholesomeness. This is why God's messenger ﷺ said: "Do not call the grape plant *karm*, for this is one of the attributes of a Muslim — call this plant the climbing rope". (*Reported in sahih Muslim*). In another narration, he ﷺ said: "*Karm* is the heart of a believer," and yet, on another occasion, he ﷺ said: "Do not call this plant *karm*, call it 'grape tree' (Arb. *'inab*), or the 'climbing rope' (Arb. *habla*)."

In essence, when God's messenger ﷺ heard people praising the plant for its generous benefits (*cf. Grapes*), and considering the excitement its name generates in their minds because of alcohol, that most cacoethic and malignant of drinks — the mother of evil drinks — produced from its fruit, he ﷺ instead was impelled to call their attention to one of the essential and prominent virtues of a believer, whose benefits are multifarious, and who sheds goodness wherever he turns, and intends God's pleasure in everything he does.

In fact, the heart of a true believer is most effulgent, and is filled with benefits, generosity, faith, trueness, light, resplendence, divine guidance, and piety — attributes which make him more worthy of being called *'karm.'*

The temperament of grapevine tree is cold and dry, while the grape leaves, its tendrils, and the grape-stalks are the least cold in the first degree. Applying a head bandage holding a plaster of powdered grape-stalks relieves headaches, and abates hot swellings, and an inunction of a pomade of the above helps reduce swelling of the stomach.

Drinking the juice of grape-stalks quells vomiting (*emesia*) and balances the stomach, while chewing on the green grape-stalks and/or fresh grapevine leaves benefits in the treatment of stomach ulcers, stops stomachache, and arrests the spitting up or coughing up of blood caused by bleeding in the lungs or the bronchi (*hemoptysis*).

The lactescent gummy secretion, or sticky colloidal carbohydrate fluid, also called resin, or tear, that is found on the grape-stalks, particularly during spring, can be taken orally with water to help dissolve kidney stones.

The resin dries into an uncrystallized, bristle mass that dissolves or swells in water. When the resin is applied directly to tetters, among other skin diseases characterized by eruption of pustules (*impetigo*), eczema, festers, or ulcerous scabies, they can accelerate their healing. However, the affected area must be disinfected first by washing it with water treated with niter, or saltpetre (*petrae* > rock; Arb. *naṯron*).[1] Spreading the resin mixed with oil also helps remove hair. Applying an inunction of grape-stalk ashes mixed with vinegar, rose oil, and rue[2] can help abate recurrent swelling of the spleen.

The oil of the grapevine flowers is costive, and their medicinal benefits are many, and are similar to those of the flowers of the palm tree.

Gray truffle (*Banāt awbar*; *Kam'a armad*)
Tuber; Ascomycetous fungi
(*See Truffle*)

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[1] *Naṯron*: A native soda of Egypt which is extracted from the salt lake of the valley of Wādi Naṯron, northwest of Cairo, containing potassium nitrate.

[2] Rue: Arb. *sadab* = *saḏāb*, (E) rue, *bot.* herb of grace.

– H –

Hail
(*See Water*)

He-goat (*Tais*)
Ovis capra
(*See Meat*)

Henna (*H̲inna*)
(*See Part II: Treatment of Headache & Hemicrania; Part III Witchcraft*)

Henna blossom
(*See Costmary;* Arb. *Fãg̲h̲iya*)

Honey (*'Asal*)

We spoke earlier in this book on the benefits of honey, (*cf. II Regulating Bowel Movement, Benefits of Honey*). Ibn Juraij said: "Eat honey, for it is a good tonic." Imam Bukhãri has classified honey as a medicine.

Honey is the natural nectar and concentrated sweetness of flowers converted by bees to a golden rich syrup. The source of the nectar the honey is made from determines its color and flavor, and the best is the light-colored variety of honey. The best honey is unadulterated by beekeepers, and is collected from mountainous areas and trees. It is then strained and has most of the impurities removed, except for some pollen and enzymes.

Honey is produced by the worker honeybee (*apis mellifera*), who sucks flower nectar with its tonguelike glossa and stores the nectar in its honey stomach. The bee regurgitates the honey and either stores it in cells or feeds drones. The worker bee carries pollen in a pollen basket located on its hind legs and scrapes the pollen off with its foreleg bristles.

Honey has the ability to absorb and retain moisture, and is an excellent food preservative, and certain varieties of honey are used in treating wounds.

Honey should be excluded from the diet of children under one year of age. (*Also see Sugar cane*)

– I –

Indian aloe wood (*'Oud Hindi*; *Ulwa*)
Exccecaria agallocha (S) ***Costus***

This genus family is common in Eastern India and in the island of Sri Lanka (*Sirandeeb*). Among other varieties of this genus family are the common inula, the Elecampane, and the Horse-elder.

There are two kinds of Aloes (Arb. *'Oud*): (1) The medicinal plant known as the common inula,[1] Arb. *Rãsin Tibbi*; and (2) the aromatic plant known as the Indian Aloe tree[2] (Arb. *'Oud Hindi*).

'Abdullãh bin Omar, God be pleased with him, reported that God's messenger ﷺ sometimes used to burn Aloe wood mixed with a little camphor and perfumed himself with it, and 'this is one of the blessings and comforts the dwellers of paradise will enjoy.' (*Reported in sahih Muslim*).

The best of such branches come from the Indian Aloe tree, and second to it is the Chinese Aloe tree, and of lesser quality is a variety known in Arabic as *Qamãri*, and another called *Mandali*. The best Aloe wood is black in color, and second best is the blue. The choicest cuts have mature and hardened outer bark that is thick and rich in its juice, while the poorest in quality are light and thin cuts that float easily if placed in water.

The Aloe wood is deposited in the earth for a full year, where the earth will consume unessential parts that disintegrate, and what remains is the aromatic substance which the earth does not absorb.

Aloe wood is hot and dry in the third degree. It opens obstruction, dissolves gases, eliminates excess moisture in the body, strengthens the intestines, satisfies and strengthens the heart, benefits the brain, sharpens the senses, halts diarrhea, and benefits in the treatment of frequent incontinence of urine (*uracratia*) caused by cold intemperament of the urinary bladder.

Ibn Samhoun spoke extensively of the various kinds of Aloe and their benefits, collectively known simply as Aloe. The process of perfuming oneself with the smoke of burning Aloe is called in Arabic *'Tajmeer'*, which in traditional *tibb* means 'to balance', that is, to value the quality of air, or to improve it, which is one of six essential principals in balancing the humors and maintaining

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[1] Also known as *Kist* كست; or the Horse-elder *Qust Shãmi** قسط شامي
[2] Aloe vera (cf. Aloe vera; Arb. *Ulwa* ألوة). Cf. Costus.

good physical condition. (*Also see Aloes-Wood; Aloeswood; Costus; Arãk*).

Indigo Leaf (*Katam*)
Indigofera plant

Imam al-Bukhãri reported that Um Salma said: "I took out a hair of God's messenger ﷺ to them, and lo, it was dyed."[1] However, Ibn Mawhab commented that Um Salma showed him the hair of God's messenger ﷺ red from henna, and not dark-blue from indigo dye. In the following chapter of the same reference, most of the companions attested that God's messenger ﷺ 'did not have enough gray hair to dye'[2] The same is confirmed in Anas' saying: "I saw the hair of God's messenger ﷺ, and it was dyed with henna."[3] (*ibid.*)

Indigo is the dark-blue[4] and dark-purple dye that was formerly obtained by fermenting the leaves of the tropical leguminous plant Indigofera. The fruit of the indigo plant resembles that of the pepper plant, and its leaves resemble those of the Myrtle plant. The plant also grows in the plains of Arabia. At their full maturation, the leaves turn black, while as green leaves, they produce an oil used in some medicinal preparations. When the leaves turn black, they are harvested, dried, and powdered for use as a dye.

The four major collections of prophetic traditions (*sunan*) confirm God's messenger's saying: "Henna and indigo are the best of dyes."

As for Imam al-Ghãfiqi, he explained that the *Katam* plant 'grows in the plains, and can reach up to six feet in height. Its leaves resemble those of the olive tree, its fruit resembles the pepper seed in shape, and its kernel turns black when crushed and fermented. Drinking a decoction of the extracted juice of the *Katam* leaves helps induce vomiting, and helps against the bite of a rabid dog. And, a decoction of such leaves when cooked in water is commonly used for ink.'

Al-Kindi contended that daubing the eyes (in *kohl*) with a decoction of indigo seeds dissolves impurities, stops excessive tearing of the eyes and soothes them.

Some people mistake the indigo leaves (*Katam*) for the dyer's woad, or dyer's weed (*Isatis tinctoria*; Arb. *wasma*, cf. *Woad*),

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[1] Reported in Sahih Bukhãri, Vol. VII, Ch. 44:785
[2] Ibid. 44:783
[3] Also see Henna Plant.
[4] The indigo plant is a member of the pea family. The pigment in indigo is called indigotin.

which is also known as wild indigo (D). The authors of *sihãh* indicated that in some customs, the indigo leaves and those of woad are mixed to produce the special dye used for hair.

According to the prophetic tradition, when Abi Qahãfa visited God's messenger ﷺ, and Abi Qahãfa's head and beard were as a shrub of the morning-glory family (Arb. *thaghãma*), God's messenger ﷺ commented: "You should modify (the color of) your gray hair, but avoid dyeing it black" (*Reported in sahïh Muslim*). This tradition may have two explanations: (1) It may forbid the dyeing of one's hair with utterly black dye; or perhaps it is permissible to mix dyer's woad, or indigo dye, with henna, and such a mixture will turn gray hair into a dark-red color; or (2) it could be intended to prohibit deception, e.g., an older man using it to attract a younger woman, or vice-versa. However, dyeing one's hair dark is permissible as long as it is not for purposes of deception. (*Also see Woad*)

– J –

Jerked meat; Dried meat (*Qadeed*)
(*See Meat*)

Jujube (*Nabaq*)
(*See Lotus fruit*)

– K –

Kamala Tree; Pseudo-saffron (*Wars*; *Qinbïl*)
Mallotus

Pseudo-saffron is a powder obtained from the coating of the seed pods of the Kamala tree, used as a base for an orange-red dye.

'Abdullãh bin Omar, God be pleased with him, reported that God's messenger ﷺ forbade the wearing of garments dyed with kamala[1] powder, true saffron or pseudo-saffron during the months of pilgrimage.

Zaid bin al-Arqam narrated that God's messenger ﷺ prescribed olive oil and pseudo-saffron for the treatment of pleurisy, and sometimes he prescribed Indian Aloe instead. (*Reported by al-Tirmithi*).

Um Salma reported that women sometimes used to apply a decoction made of pseudo-saffron and olive oil to their faces during childbirth to abate chloasma (*cyasma*; Arb. *Kalaf*).[2]

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[1] Kamala: *Mallotus philippinensis* of the spurge family.
[2] A skin discoloration condition of the face and the chest after delivery.

Kamala powder, or pseudo-saffron is hot and dry in the second degree, and the best variety grows in Yemen. The best quality is the reddish-brown, and is used as ointment in cases of chloasma, itch, herpetic eruptions, and fissures, and is also used as a vermifuge, to expel intestinal worms and parasites. Using it as dye generates a strong caustic effect, and it can be used as a drink in the treatment of leukoderma (*poliosis*).

As a drink, a potion made of one dram is sufficient for regular cases, and the benefits of the kamala powder are similar to those of Indian Aloe.

Wearing a garment dyed with kamala powder increases the body's production of semen. (*Also see Saffron; Arb. Z'afarãn*).

Kid (*Jadiy*)
Ovis capra
(*See Meat*)

Kitchen salt (*Milh*)
(*See Salt*)

Kohl
(*See Antimony*)

Kust-root (*Qust*; *Qustus*; *Kist*)
(*See Costus*)

– L –

Lamb (*Lahm dhã'n*)
Ovis aries
(*See Meat*)

Leaf-beet (*Silq*)
(*See Swisschard beet*)

Lapwing
(*See Hoopoe*)

Leek (*Kurrãth ma'arouf*; *Kurrãth roomy*)
Allium porrum
(*See Wild-leek*)

Lentils (*'Adas*)
Ervum lens; lens esculenta; Lens culinaris

All the sayings attributed to God's messenger ﷺ concerning lentils are of doubtful authenticity, and were probably fabricated by farmers and merchants, including[1] the apocryphal sayings quoted by Imam al-Baihaqi that 'lentils soften the heart, bring tears to the eyes, take away pride', and are 'the food of the righteous ones.'

However, lentils are mentioned in the holy Qur'an as being desired by the children of Israel, when they said: ❮ Moses, we can no longer bear to eat only one kind of food! Pray to your lord to give us common earthly products such as green herbs, cucumbers, lentils, and onions.' He replied: 'Would you want to trade what is better for what is worse?' ❯ (*Qur'an 2:61*). The food God Almighty had been providing for them then was manna and quails.

Lentils are cold and dry, and they encompass two opposing temperaments: one balances the constitution, and the other is a copragogue. Lentils' skin is hot and dry in the third degree, is pungent, and therefore stimulates bowel movement. Lentils' essential medicinal properties are contained in their skin, and that is why eating them whole is healthier than eating them ground or split. Whole lentils are lighter for the stomach and less harmful, for their pulp is slow to digest because of their cold and dry temperament. Furthermore, lentils stimulate the black bile and can affect acute melancholia, and harm the nerves. Lentils thicken the blood (*pyknemiac*) and must be avoided by people suffering from sloth and apathy (*acedia;* Arb. *sawdã'*), which is an acute depression and anxiety resulting from imbalance of the black bile. For such people, excess eating of lentils can aggravate their condition, induce acute mental disorder, obsession, and cause susceptibility to infectious diseases, including quartan fever. Such negative properties can be rectified by cooking lentils with their opposites, such as chard and spinach, sumak, olives, coriander, and by raising the portion of fat in one's dish.

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[1] Lentils are a legume of the pea family *Leguminosae*, and they are among the most ancient of cultivated vegetables. Their seeds are exceptionally rich in protein (22%). The round, flattened seeds are contained in pods and must be threshed during harvesting. Their color ranges from white to green, brown, orange, and violet blue. Lentils are eaten whole in soups and stews and are also ground into a flour, while their straw and flax (Arb. *tubn*) are usually used for animal forage, and sometimes their skin is included.

The most harmful combination is that of eating a lentil dish with pickles as condiments. One must avoid combining lentils with sweets in the same meal, for this can cause obstruction of the liver, and eating lentils regularly can cause dimness of vision because of their crude dryness. Excessive eating of lentils also can cause retention of urine and cold sores, and produces dense gases in the intestines and the liver. The best variety of lentils is the white and rounded variety, and they cook in a short time.

Lime Depilatory (*Nũra*)

Um Salma narrated that when God's messenger ﷺ used a depilatory, he would apply the mixture to the private parts before applying it to other parts of his body. (*Reported in Sunan Ibn Mãja*).

It is also narrated that the first to used lime depilatory was God's prophet Solomon, the son of David, upon both of whom be peace.

Lime depilatory is a hair removing agent made of two parts lime, and one part arsenic mixed with water and then placed in the sun or in a hot bath for coction. When the mixture turns dark blue, it is smeared over the intended area, and the person must sit for approximately one hour before washing it off with water. The site of depilation must then be anointed with henna to diminish the burning effect.[1]

Liver (*Kabid*)
(*See Meat*)

Lizard (*Dhabb*)
(*See Uromastyx*)

Locust (*Jarãd*)
(*See Meat: II Fowls, Birds*)

Lote Tree (*Sidir*)
(*See Lotus*)

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[1] Arsenic; Arb. *zarnikh* : Orpiment (*arsenic trisulfide*) and realgar (*arsenic sulfide*) are used as depilatories in combination with lime and water. The combination of lime and metal sulfides dissolves hair, however, it does not affect the hair root, and it does not prevent regrowth of hair. On its own, arsenic is extremely poisonous and caustic, and in depilatory creams may burn or disfigure the skin. Note: If there is prolonged contact with the skin, malignant skin tumors can develop.

Lotus fruit; Jujube (*Nabaq*)
Rhamnaceae; Rhamnus; Ziziphus vulgaris

In his book 'Medicine of the Prophet', Abu Na'ïm recorded the apocryphal tradition that the Jujube fruit was the first thing Adam ate when he was made to descended to the earth.

In another prophetic tradition describing the Lote Tree (*Sidir*) that God's messenger ﷺ saw during his Nocturnal Journey (Arb. *Mi'rãj*) in which he was brought to receive commandments from God Almighty, he described the tree as having leaves as large as those of elephants' ears, and fruits similar to those of the Jujube fruit, always ripened, abounding, and stacked in rows like a palisade. (*Reported in ṣaḫïḫ Muslim & ṣaḫïḫ Bukhãri*)

Jujube is a member of the Buckthorn family, deciduous shrubs and small trees found in temperate and subtropical regions, and they bear a datelike fruit that ripens in late fall.

The jujube fruit resembles a medlar; it is small and dark with white flesh, and is eaten fresh, dried, or candied. The pit or stone is sometimes eaten as a nut. The leaves, bark, and berries have considerable purgative qualities, and the bark contains a drug used in laxatives.

Among its medicinal benefits, the jujube fruit[1] balances digestion, effects evacuation of the bowels, coats the stomach, balances intemperament of the yellow bile, nourishes the body, increases the appetite, generates phlegm, and helps relieve diarrhea caused by hot intemperament of the gallbladder and yellow jaundice.

The jujube fruit is slow to digest, and its harm can be alleviated by eating honeycomb. However, despite its harm, it will still have its effects on the intestines, and in balancing of the intemperament yellow bile.

The fruit is cold and dry, however, *ḫakims* differ in opinion to whether the fruit is moist or dry, and we can say that its level of moisture is cold and moist, and that its dryness is cold and dry.

– M –

Maghãfir
(*See Acacia orfata*)

Manna (*Mann*)
(*See Truffle*)

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[1] The Jujube fruits is rich in vitamin C and can be made into a drink.

Meat (*Lahm*.. Listed by class and according to common usage).

❮ The Book of Meat ❯

I- Red Meat

God Almighty said: ❮ We provided (all kinds of) fruit and meat they desire ❯ (*Qur'an 52:22*), ❮ And the flesh of fowls that they desire ❯ (*Qur'an 56:21*).

Abi Dardã' narrated that God's messenger ﷺ said: "Meat is the best food in this world and in the hereafter" (*Reported in Sunan Ibn Mãja*). Abi Dardã' also narrated a similar prophetic tradition, saying: "Meat is the best live-food substance (Arb. *adïm*) is this world and in the hereafter."

Delighting His wife 'Aisha, God be pleased with her, God's messenger ﷺ once said: "The excellence and superiority of 'Aisha over all women is like that of *tharïd* over all food." As we explained earlier, *tharïd* is made of meat and bread, (*cf. Bread*).

Al-Zahri maintained that eating meat enhances one's strength seventy folds, while Muhammad bin Wãsi' contended that eating meat enhances one's sight. 'Ali bin Abi Tãlib, God bless his countenance, said : "Eating meat clarifies one's color, renders the abdomen leaner, and enhances one's good character." He also said: "Abstaining from eating meat for forty nights retrogrades one's temper." Nãfi' reported that meat was the staple diet of 'Abdullãh bin Omar, God be pleased with him, upon breaking his fast during the month of Ramadan, and throughout his travels. Abu Huraira narrated that God's messenger ﷺ said: "The heart rejoices when one eats meat." (*Reported by Ibn Mãja*). Abu Dãwoud reported 'Aisha's narration of God's messenger ﷺ saying: "Do not cut meat with a knife, this is foreign to us, instead, nibble on it, this is healthier, more wholesome, and restorative." However, Imam Ahmad, rebutted this saying as untrue in two prophetic traditions of cutting the meat with a knife. (*cf. Broiled calf*).

There are many varieties of meat. Each kind is characterized by its properties, origin, and habitat of the animal. In this section, God willing, we will discuss them, and explain their characteristics, benefits, and harm.

(1) **Lamb, Motton, Sheep, or Ovis Meat**
Ovis aries
(*Lahm dhã'n*)

Motton meat is hot in the second degree, and moist in the first degree. The best kind is the yearling. It generates healthy

blood, and promotes strength when properly digested. Motton meat is particularly beneficial for people of cold and mild temperaments, and it benefits athletes and soldiers during cold weather. Motton meat also benefits people who suffer from imbalance of the black bile, it strengthens the memory, and sharpens the intellect.

The meat of an old and slim sheep is unhealthy, and the same is the meat of a ewe (Arb. *na'aja*; *shãt*), that is when the female sheep becomes over fifteen months old. The best of motton meat is that of a black male, for it is lighter, tastier, and more beneficial. Yet, a castrated motton is better and healthier. The best of red sheep are the fat ones. Their meat contains more nutrients and is light to the stomach. The meat of a teg (a one year old male sheep) has less nutritional values than the others, and its rises to the surface of the stomach during digestion.

The best meat in an animal is the closest to its bones. The upper right side of the animal is healthier and lighter for the stomach than the upper left section, while the upper front half of the animal is healthier than that posterior half and lighter to the stomach. It is reported in the two collections of correct prophetic traditions that God's messenger ﷺ used to prefer the right shoulder of a motton, and in general the meat of the upper section of a sheep, with the exception of the head. Al-Farazdaq once sent someone to buy him meat, and said to him: "Get ribs and shoulders, and do not buy meat from the head or near the stomach, for they hold the disease." Moreover, the neck of the animal remains healthy, tasty, light on the stomach, and easier to digest, and yet, the meat of the right front arm is more tender, leaner, has less fat, is the furthest from holding a disease, is lighter for the stomach, easier to digest, and helps the body to generate salubrious blood.

(2) **Goat Meat; Billy goat; He-goat; Kid**
Ovis capra
(*Lahm al-Mã'iz*)

The temperament of goat meat has little heat and is dry. The effects it generates in the humors are inferior, and goat meat is hard to digest, and its nutritional values are mediocre.

The meat of a he-goat, or a billy goat (Arb. *Tais*) is unquestionably unhealthy. It is extremely dry, hard to digest, and it produces imbalance of the black bile. When its flesh is exceedingly dry, it becomes harder to digest, and it generates atrabiliary blood.

Al-Jãhiz narrated that his physician advised him to never eat goat meat, saying: "It causes distress and melancholia, engenders short memory, agitates the black humor, corrupts the blood, and promotes mental disorder in children." Other physicians contend that only the meat of an old goat is disliked, and particularly for older people. However, people who are accustomed to goat meat as their main diet still benefit from it.

Galen regarded the meat of a yearling to have moderate benefits, such as balancing of the gastric juices, and he preferred a female goat to a male goat.

Imam al-Nisã'i reported in his collection of correct prophetic traditions that God's messenger ﷺ said: "Treat goats kindly, and protect them, for they are among the (quadruped) creatures of paradise." (*Reported in sunan al-Nisã'i*).

In considering the authenticity of this prophetic saying, we aught to regard the harm of goat meat described by physicians as limited, and we must not generalize it. Hence, we also must consider the condition of a weak stomach, humoral imbalance, and predisposition. This is particularly true for people who are not accustomed to eating it, and who are used to eating blander, or more delicate food, and such are the rich people who live in and urban areas, and they are a minority.

(3) **Kid**
Ovis capra
(*Lahm al-Jadiy*)

The meat of a kid is mild and is relatively balanced as long as the kid is newly weaned. The meat of a kid is easier to digest because of the recent effects of milk in its system, which aperient characteristics agrees with most digestive systems. The meat of a kid is also leaner than that of camels, and it generates balanced blood and excellent humors.

(4) **Beef; Beeves; Oxen; Steer; Buffalo; Bison**[1]
Bos; Bovins; Bos bubalus; Bos bison
(*Lahm al-baqar*; *Lahm al-'ijl*)

Cow meat, commonly known as beef or its varieties, is cold and dry, and unless correctly digested, it is hard to convert, slow to pass, and the blood it generates is mostly effected by the temperament of the black bile.

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[1] Buffalo; Bison: Its meat is considerably lower in fat, and is 50% lower in cholesterol than beef. (*Ref. The National Buffalo Association, USA*)

Beef is mainly good for hard working people, and particularly those who engage in strenuous physical labor. However, addiction to beef can cause diseases that originate from intemperaments of the black bile, including herpetic eruptions, tetter, and lack of skin pigmentation, resulting in white patches (*leukodermia*), a mild form of leprosy. Beef also can effect mangy, as well as another skin disease characterized by the formation of scaly, reddish patches (*psoriasis*), and it can cause elephantiasis, cancer, obsession, and quartan fever, besides several categories of swelling and tumors. This inference must be of particular concern to those who are not accustomed to beef as their main diet, and those who do not drive away its harm by balancing it with the correct amount of black pepper, garlic, cinnamon, ginger, and similar spices and condiments.

The meat of a steer is less cold than that of a cow, and the meat of a cow is less dry than that of a steer. However, the most balanced of the two is veal, and particularly that of a fat calf, which is tastier, healthier, and more nutritious. Calf meat is hot and moist, and when correctly digested, it offers noticeable health benefits.

(5) **Horse meat**
Equus caballus
(*Lahm al-Faras*)

It is reported in the sahïh that Asmã', God be pleased with her, said: "We slaughtered a horse and ate from it when God's messenger ﷺ was amidst us." It is also narrated in both sahïh *Bukhãri & Muslim* that on the day of the battle of Khybar, God's messenger ﷺ permitted eating horse meat, and he forbade that of wild asses (*equus asinus*)."

However, horse meat is hot and dry, it is tough and acidic, it generates atrabiliary blood, and is harmful for people of delicate constitutions, i.e. city dwellers. (*Also see Camel meat*)

(6) **Camel meat**
Camelus
(*Lahm al-Jamal; Lahm al-Fasïl*)

It is permissible to eat camel meat when necessary, or for lack of other food sources. God's messenger ﷺ and his blessed companions ate camel meat in their home, and during their travel. The most delicious and nutritious of camel meat is that of a newly weaned camel (Arb. *Fasïl*).

As for people who are accustomed to eating it, camel meat is a good substitute for lamb, and causes them no harm. As for city people, and particularly the rich who are used to eating delicate food, they may feel aversion to it, and perhaps because they are not accustomed to its strong taste.

Camel meat is hot and dry. It is highly rich in nutrients, it generates atrabiliary blood, and it is hard to digest. However, its highly rich nutritional values may not suit everyone, and can sometimes produce the opposite effects.

As for God's messenger ﷺ asking people to take a ritual ablution after preparing, or after eating, or even after touching camel meat, this tradition mostly pertains to hygienic considerations rather than expressly affecting ritual purity. Meaning that one should not commence eating before washing his hands, and yet, one must not attend to his prayers without ablution. However, one can eat broiled meat, and as long as fire has touched any meat, then he is not required to perform ritual ablution upon eating it, and before attending to his ritual prayers.

(8) **Uromastyx; Uromastix**
Veranidae; Warran-lizard; Monitor; Lizard
(*Dhabb*)

See Uromastyx.

(9) **Gazelle; Deer**
Gazella; Procapra; Cervidae family
(*Ghazãl*)

Gazelle here refers to all varieties of *genera Gazella* among other ruminants of the family *Cervidae* and *Procapra*, including the African and the Asia gazelle and antelope (Arb. *Zhabi*), the deer family *gazella sœmmeringi* (Arb. *Aryal*), the deer, the fallow-deer, the buck (S. *Dama*), the musk deer (Arb. *Ayyil al-Musk*; *Kastura*), and the *Oedemeridae* (Arb. *Ãdam, Ghazãl al-sahrã*), among others of the *Cervidae* family.

The meat of a gazelle is hot and dry, and some say it is in-between. Gazelle meat is highly nutritious for balanced constitutions and healthy bodies. Gazelle meat is a desiccant, it is quick to digest, and the best and most tasty of such meat is that of a fawn.

(10) **Antelope**
(*Zhabiy*; *'Ab'āb*; *'Ab'ab*)

Antelope meat is hot and dry. It is a desiccants, and is particularly beneficial for people of humid constitution. Avicenna explained that antelope meat generates atrabiliary blood, and is the best meat of wild animals.

(11) **Rabbit**[1] (*Arnab*)
Oryctolagus cuniculus

Anas bin Mālik, God be pleased with him, said: "We saw a rabbit in the wild, and we hunted it. After preparing it, Abu Talha selected the hip and sent it to God's messenger ﷺ who accepted the gift" (*Reported in sahīhs Bukhāri and Muslim*).

Rabbit meat is moderately hot and dry, and the best part of it is the back and the hind legs, or the hip. Rabbit meat is best eaten broiled. It balances the stomach, helps excretion of urine, and dissolves stones. Eating rabbit's head relaxes muscular tension and benefits in the treatment of dystaxia, and feverish shiver.

(12) **Onager; Wild ass**
Equus hemionus onager[2]
(*Himār wahshi*)

Wild ass, or onager, is different from zebra (*equus zebra;* Arb. *zarad*). Onager lives in the wild, and is not commonly domesticated. Al-Bukhāri narrated that Qatāda was known for his skill in hunting them. On this subject, Qatāda narrated that he was in the company of God's messenger ﷺ together with a group of pilgrims. Qatāda, had not yet entered the ritual state of a pilgrim (*ihrām*), he therefore sought and hunted an onager and brought its meat to God's messenger ﷺ who permitted the companions to eat from it.

Jābir, God be pleased with him, said: "During Khybar,[3] and out of necessity, we had to eat the meat of horses and onager." (*Reported in sunan Ibn Māja*).

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[1] The Old World rabbit (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*) is gregarious, living in large colonial burrows, or warrens, which it digs itself. Rabbits are members of the order *Lagomorpha*, which also include the hares and the short-legged pikas. Jackrabbits also are hares, and some domestic breeds of hares are rabbits. Hares are native to Eurasia, North America, and Africa. A female rabbit may have up to five litters per year. Hares (*Lepus*) are mammals belonging to the family Leporidae. Rabbits and pikas also are lagomorphs. Hares differ from rabbits in that they do not dig burrows and that their young are fully furred and open-eyed at birth. The jackrabbit and the snowshoe rabbit are hares.

[2] The onager of Mesopotamia and Eastern India is of the horse species of *equus* (Equus asinus onager; Arb. *Akhdar*), and is the product of their mixed offspring.

[3] Ref. The Battle of Khybar.

The meat of onager is hot and dry. It is rich in nutrients, and it generates atrabiliary blood and thick blood. Its suet (Arb. *shahm*) benefits toothache when mixed with common inula herb (Arb. *rãsin Tibbi*), and it dissolves thick gases that originate in the kidney. An inunction of its suet also benefits in the treatment of chloasma, a skin condition resulting from malnutrition, or pregnancy.

In general, the meat of wild animals generates atrabiliary blood, and thick blood, while the best are that of gazelles and deers, while rabbits come third. (*Also see Broiled calf; Meat; Dietary planning*).

(13) Fetus meat; Embryo
Fœtus
(*Luhüm al-ajinna*)

The fetus is a living or dead babe animal which is sometimes found in the womb of a slaughtered animal, and its blood is congested.

It is narrated in the prophetic traditions that someone asked God's messenger ﷺ: "O messenger of God, we slaughter an animal, and sometimes find a fetus in its womb. What should we do?" He replied: "Eat it if you want, for the benefits of a fetus are those of its mother." Hence, it is not unlawful to eat it. Yet, God's messenger ﷺ forbade the dwellers of Iraq to eat the flesh of a fetus except when it is found alive, and they must sacrifice it as well.

(14) Jerked meat;[1] Dried meat
(*Qadeed*)

Bilãl, may God be forever pleased with him, said: "I slaughtered a ewe (Arb. *na'aja*; *shãt*) to serve God's messenger ﷺ during a journey, and he said to me: 'clean it up and prepare it.'[2] So I did, and served him of it until we reached Medina."

Jerked meat is healthier and more nutritious than old meat, or meat preserved in salt. It strengthens the constitution, although it can cause itching as a side effect. To control that, one must add cooling herbs white mullein[3] (*verbascum alatum*. Arb. pl. *abãzeer*; singl. *buzayr*; *busayr labid*) to his food when eating jerked

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[1] Meat sliced into strips and dried, esp. originally in the sun.

[2] Prepare it: i.e., slice it into strips, and let it dry.

[3] White mulleins are mostly biennial plants of the genus Verbascum in the figwort family. Mulleins may grow up to 6 feet high, and have woolly or downy foliage, tall spikes, and sometimes white flowers.

meat. Jerked meat is excellent for people of hot temperament.

In general, preserved meat is hot and dry, and can be used as a desiccant. Moist and healthy meat is more nutritious, although eating jerked meat in excess can cause colitis, but one can neutralize such harm by cooking it with yogurt and ghee, and this kind of diet is helpful for people of hot and moist humors.

II- Fowls; Birds; Poultry
(*Lahm al-Tayr*)

Speaking of one of the rewards of the ❮ Foremost in piety and devotion ❯ (*Qur'an 56:9*), who will dwell eternally in the paradise of God's nearness and blessings, God Almighty says: ❮ And (in it, they also eat) the flesh of fowls that they desire ❯ (*Qur'an 56:21*).

In *Masnad al-Bazzãr*, among other references on prophetic traditions, God's messenger ﷺ is quoted to have said: "You would look at a bird of paradise, and when you desire it, it will fall into your hand, broiled, and ready to eat."

As for birds in this world, some are lawful to eat and others are unlawful. The impermissible fowl flesh are the predaceous birds,[1] or the birds of pray, having sharp, hooked claws, or curved talons, including the peregrine falcon (also called a tiercel or the royal falcon. Arb. *shãhin*), the white goshawk, the common hawk, and all varieties of birds that feed on carcasses, decaying cadavers, and small preys, including condors, vultures, white headed eagles, storks, blue magpies, hooded crows (also known as gray-back crows), common black crows, and all varieties of hoopoe and shrikes among other birds that one may kill but must not eat, including the kite and the common crow, all of which are unlawful food for Muslims.

As for the lawful fowl flesh, it includes a wide variety of poultry including all species of domesticated birds that are raised for this purpose, such as chicken, turkey, duck, goose, fowl, pigeon, pheasant, and other birds. Among food-providing birds, chickens are the most important because they are a source of meat and eggs. Next in importance comes turkeys and ducks which are raised solely for their meat.

(1) Chicken; Domestic hen/cock
(*Dujãj*)

Abi Musã, God be pleased with him, said: "God's messenger ﷺ ate chicken meat and had chicken soup" (*Reported in sahïh*

[1] Birds of prey: members of the family *Accipitridae*, and the order *Falconiformes*.

Bukhāri and sahīh Muslim).

Chicken meat the best of birds' meat, and it is hot and moist in the first degree. Chicken meat is most nourishing. It is light for the stomach, it digests quickly and mixes efficiently with the humors. Chicken meat benefits the brain (*encephalon*), increases semen, clears the throat, improves the complexion of the skin, excels the functions of brain, and generates good blood.

However, chicken meat, and particularly the domestic hen, tends to be a little too moist, and some physicians contend that eating it excessively can cause increase in the uric acid in the blood, or gout (Arb. *naqras*), although this opinion is questionable.

The flesh of a domestic cock is less moist and more hot. The meat of old chicken benefits impotency, colic, asthma, heartburn, and dissolves thick gases when cooked in the water of safflower (*Carthamus*; Arb. *Qortom*) and dill-seed (*anethum graveolens*; Arb. *Shibith*).

The best of cock are the gelded, and the best of hens are those that never laid eggs. The meat of young hens (Arb. *farrouj*) is the best and it is easier to digest, it promotes bowel movement, and generates healthy blood.

(2) Francolin;[1] Common francolin
Francolinus; Genus partridge
(*Durāj*)

Its meat is hot and dry in the second degree. It is light for the stomach, easy to digest, and it generates balanced blood. Eating francolin meat regularly and in excess can weaken the sight.

(3) Partridge; Sand partridge; Bonham
Perdriz; Perdix perdix
(*Hajal*; *Qabaj*)

Their meat is hot and dry in the second degree. Partridge meat is easy to digest, and it generates balanced and healthy blood.

(4) Goose; Swan
(*Aouz*)

Their meat is hot and dry. If goose or swan meat becomes a staple diet, they can be harmful. However, their meat does not produce much chyme.

[1] Genus Francolinus, family Phasianidae of African and Asiatic partridges, and it is indigenous to the Thar desert in India.

(5) **Duck, common duck**
Anas
(Batt)

Their meat is hot and moist. Duck meat does not usually agree with the stomach. It is hard to digest, and it produces excess ejecta.

(6) **Bustard**[1]
Otis
(Hubãri)

It is reported in the prophetic traditions that Muwaih, the son of Omar bin Safinah narrated that his grandfather said: "I ate bustard meat with God's messenger ﷺ."

Bustards are of the family Otididae, or Otidae, of the order Gruiformes. Bustard meat is hot and dry. It is hard to digest, although it benefits people who engage in strenuous physical labor.

(8) **Crane**[2]
Crus
(kurki)

Crane meat is lightly dry, and there are conflicting views as to whether it is hot or cold. Crane meat generates atrabiliary blood, and benefits people who engage in strenuous physical labor. The bird must be kept aside for one to two days after slaughtering and before eating it.

(9) **Birds and Coridalides**
Prunella; Alaudidae; Corydallis
('Asãfir; Qanãbir)[3]

'Abdullãh bin Omar, God be pleased with him, narrated that God's messenger ﷺ said: "No one will escape God's questioning for killing a bird needlessly, and without giving regard to its dues." People asked: "What are its dues?" God's messenger ﷺ replied: "That you slaughter it solely for food, and that you do not sever its head and then throw the bird away." (*Reported in Sunan Al-Nisã'i*).

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[1] Bustards live near grasslands and brushlands, and have long necks and legs. Bustards look somewhat like turkeys, although they are more closely related to cranes and rails. Their plumage is gray or brown, often with bars or spots, and white, brown, or black beneath. Bustards can fly well but stay mainly on the ground, gather in flocks, feeding on a wide variety of plants and insects.

[2] Cranes are long-legged, bulky, omnivorous wading birds of the family Gruidae. Their plumage is usually brown, gray, or white. They prefer living near marshy conditions, and they feed on plant materials and a wide variety of small animals.

[3] *Corydallis.*

In another prophetic tradition, 'Amru bnu Sharīd quoted his father who heard God's messenger ﷺ say: "Whoever kills a bird needlessly (i.e. for sport), the soul of the bird will soar to Almighty Allah, roaring and crying, 'My Lord! So and so killed me for game, and not for a useful reason!' " (*ibid.*)

The meat of birds is hot and dry. It balances body's constitution, helps digestion, and increases semen. A soup of bird's meat helps evacuation of the bowels, and benefits the joints. Eating the brain of birds prepared with ginger and onions arouses sexual desire (*aphrodisiac*), although it produces insalubrious effects when mixing with the humors.

(10) **Pigeons**[1]

(*Hamãm*)

Pigeon meat is hot and moist. The meat of wild pigeon is less moist than that of domesticated pigeons, and the meat of its chicks is even more moist. The meat of domesticated pigeons is lighter for the stomach and more nutritious. The meat of male pigeons helps in curing laxity, abates abnormal sensation of burning or prickling of the skin (*paresthesia*), apolexy, excessive sleep, feverish shiver, and cerebral palsy. Raising domesticated pigeons and breathing their intimation and surrounding air also benefit the above.

The meat of pigeon chicks benefits in the treatment of sciatica, helps the kidney, and increases the blood count.

(11) **Sandgrouse; Pterocles**
Pteroclididae

(*Qutã*)

Sandgrouse is a variety of pigeons of the order of *Columbiformes*. Its meat is dry, it generates atrabiliary blood, causes constipation, and is one of the most harmful food, however, it does benefit in the treatment of dropsy.

(12) **Quail; Scaled quail**
Cotrnix; Crex pratensis

(*Summãnī*; *Salwã*; *Sifrid*)

Quails meat is hot and dry, it benefits the joints but harms the kidney, and such disadvantage can be alleviated by preparing

[1] Pigeon is an inclusive name for birds of the family *Columbidae*. Larger species are called pigeons and smaller ones are known as doves.

[2] Fumitory: *Fumariaceae*, order *Papaverales* of the dicotyledonous plants; genus *Fumaria*, with watery juice and spurred flowers, formerly used in medicine.

them with vinegar and fumitory[2] (Arb. *Shãhitrij*; *Kasfara*). The medicinal properties of qauils depend on which tree they alight.

The flesh of quails benefits the chest and cough, and it contains a detergent property. Their meat produces excellent chyme, and is a good food for both healthy and convalescing people.

One should avoid eating nocturnal birds that feed at night on rotten and decaying substances, and on agricultural pests. However, birds' meat digests faster than that of cattle. The most expeditious parts to digest that provide the least nutritional values are the neck and the wings, and it must be noted her that he soup of fowls is healthier than a soup of bovine, sheep, and other livestock.

(13) **Locusts**[1]
Schistocerca gregaria
(*Jarãd*)

It is reported in the two collections of true prophetic traditions that 'Abdullãh bin Abi 'Aoufa, God be pleased with him, said: "We joined God's messenger ﷺ in seven campaigns, and often we had (nothing to) feed on but locusts." (*Sahïh Muslim and sahïh Bukhãri*).

Omar, God be pleased with him, said: "It was made permissible for us to eat two kinds of dead creatures, and two kinds of blood-bearing organs, these are, fish and locusts, and livers and spleens." (*Reported in the Masnad*).

Locusts are hot and dry, and they provide meager nutritional value. Eating locusts flesh regularly causes emaciation, and produces wasting. Fumigation with locusts benefits in treating retention of urine and difficulty of urination, and particularly for women. Locusts can also be used as a fumigant to treat hemorrhoids. Broiled locusts also benefits the treatment of scorpion stings, and eating locusts is harmful for sufferers of pykno-epilepsy.

As food, locusts flesh produces adverse effects when mixing with the humors.

It must be noted here that eating meat regularly and in excess is unhealthy, and is the cause of numerous serious blood diseases, acute diseases of obesity, and severe feverish conditions. Omar bin Al-Khattãb, God be pleased with him, said: "Beware of meat, for it is as addictive and voraciously deleterious (to one's health) as wine." (*Reported in The Levelled Path, Muwatta' Mãlik*). Moreover,

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[1] The most famous species are the desert locust *Schistocerca gregaria*.

it is even interesting for Hippocrate, who was known as the father of medicine, to say: "Do not make your stomachs the graves of animals."

Melon (*Baṯṯīkh*)
Citrulus vulgaris

There are several prophetic sayings concerning watermelon. All of them are not well referenced except the one reported by Abu Dãwoud and al-Tirmithi, whereby, it is reported that God's Messenger ﷺ ate watermelon together with fresh dates, and he stipulated that they balance one another. He said: "The heat in one drives away the cold in the other, and vice-versa."

Watermelon is cold and moist.[1] The greater its sweetness, the greater the heat. It refreshes the body and brain, assuages the thirst, increases the excretion of urine, eases constipation, and helps those suffering from inflamed hemorrhoids. Eating watermelon helps the body to expel bladder and kidney stones, and an embrocation of watermelon seeds can help to remove freckles.

Watermelon is cooling and digests faster than the snake cucumber or the plain cucumber (*cucumis sativus; Arb. khiyãr*). Watermelon converts easily and becomes a detergent and an aperient to the first humor it encounters in the stomach. It cleanses the stomach, washes the bladder, purifies the vision, increases the spinal fluid, aids sexual intercourse, and cuts a cold. To receive its full benefits, watermelon must be eaten in season, before and after the meal, but it should not be eaten at time of dire hunger. It is most beneficial when eaten at room temperature, but if eaten chilled, one can balance it by adding ginger to his meal, to eliminate possible harm from the cold temperature on the stomach.

Milk (*Ḫalīb*; *Laban*)

Almighty Allah says: ❮ In cattle there is a lesson for you: We give you a drink they carry in their glands, that issues from betwixt a secreting mucus[2] and blood ❯ (*Qur'an 16:66*). The Almighty One also spoke in the holy Qur'an about paradise, saying: ❮ In it are rivers of water that does not turn brackish, and rivers of milk which taste does not change ❯ (*Qur'an 47:15*).

In the prophetic traditions (*sunan*), it is narrated that God's messenger ﷺ said: "Whenever one partakes a meal of God's

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[1] Watermelon has nearly 91% water and 8% sucrose.

[2] (1) A secreting mucus produced in the pituitary gland. Pituitary: *pitu-*, juice > base, *pie-*, *pi-*, to be fat. Arb. *rafath*. (2) Appropriate combinations of hormones interacting synergistically to stimulate mammary development of milk.

provisions, he must pray: 'Lord bless what You gave us, and provide us with what is best,' and whenever God provides someone with a drink of milk, he must pray, 'Lord bless what You gave us, and increase our share of it,' for I do not know anything that can rival milk, or be a substitute for it, being simultaneously both food and drink." (*Reported in Sunan Abu Dăwoud*).

Although milk is regarded as a simple substance, it constitutes a natural and integral part of the composition of three categories of needed nutrients[1] — that is: (1) water; (2) fat; and, (3) cheese. As for cheese, its temperament is cold and moist. It provides the body with complete nourishment, and it contains high levels of protein, antibodies, and calcium, among others. The temperament of fat in milk is moderately hot and damp. It agrees with the natural disposition of a healthy body, and it offers numerous benefits. Moreover, the fat in milk allows for greater absorption of fat-soluble nutrients into the bloodstream via the intestines. And finally, the temperament of water is hot and humid. It acts as an attenuant needed for bowel movement, and as a general moistener for the body.

Altogether, the temperament of milk is cold and humid. However, some say that it earns its attribute of hot temperament immediately upon milking, and it is best drunk when freshly milked, because its nutritional value decreases by the hour.[2] Fresh milk is best. It is cold and humid, and it generates chyme. When milk turns sour, its temperament becomes hot.

Good milk has a bright white color, it produces an appetizing aroma, it is agreeable to the taste, it has a delicate sweetness, a stable consistency, and balanced fat contents.

The quality of milk for a newborn is usually selected after forty days of the child's birth.[3] The animal must be young, corpulent, and strong. Furthermore, the animal must be feeding on good fodder, grazing on good pasture, and drinking unpolluted waters. Such milk will generate healthy blood, provide complete nutrition, and promote healthy growth in the infant.

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[1] Milk is very low in iron and ascorbic acid, and it is low in niacin. Calcium and phosphorus levels in milk are very high. Vitamin A levels are high in whole milk. The composition of whole milk is approximately 4.9% carbohydrate, 3.5% fat, 3.5% protein, and about 87% water.

[2] Riboflavin is present in significant quantities in milk unless the milk has been exposed to light.

[3] Initially, and before milk is produced, the mother's breast produces colostrum, a deep-yellow liquid containing high levels of protein and antibodies that will help the infant resist the bacteria and viruses that cause illness. Then the mother's hormones change into a blue-white color with a very thin consistency.

As for adults, good milk helps alleviate depression and distress. It calms the spirit, and benefits in the treatment of illnesses of the black bile. Drinking milk with honey cleanses internal ulcerations caused by putrefacted humors. Drinking milk with sugar beautifies the complexion and causes plumpness. Drinking milk prevents any harmful effects of sexual intercourse. It benefits the bronchi and lungs, and is beneficial for sufferers of tuberculosis.

Drinking milk excessively is bad for headache, the stomach, the kidney, and the spleen, and it can hurt the teeth and the gums. This is why one must rinse one's mouth with water after drinking milk. It is reported in the two collections of prophetic traditions that when God's messenger ﷺ had some milk, he would call for water to rinse his mouth. God's messenger ﷺ once commented, saying: "It contains a greasiness." (*Reported by Bukhãri and Muslim*).

Drinking milk is bad when suffering from fever or cold, and it can harm the brain because of the rapidity with which it converts into bile. Ibn 'Abbãss, God be pleased with him, narrated that God's messenger ﷺ said that the fat of milk was bad for the feverish and for those who suffer from headache (*Reported in saḫĩḫ Bukhãri and Muslim*). Drinking milk regularly and excessively can cause dimness of sight, aching of joints, obstruction of the kidney, gasping, or souffle in the stomach and the intestines. All of these reactions, among others, can be rectified by adding honey, eating ginger, sweet preserves, or similar food together with milk. It must be noted here that such negative effects as well as some allergic reactions to milk happen mostly to those who abstain completely from drinking milk, and particularly those who are not accustomed to drinking it.

(1) **Sheep Milk**
(*Halĩb-u dhã'n*)

Sheep milk is the thickest and the most damp. Its butterfat content is richer than goat milk and cow milk. Sheep milk generates excess phlegm, and drinking it regularly can cause white skin pigmentations. Sheep milk must be diluted with water before drinking it in order to increase the body's benefit of it, to lessen its harm, to assuage thirst, and to accelerate its cooling effect.

(2) **Goat Milk**
(*Halĩb-ul Mã'iz*)

The temperament of goat's milk is subtly moderate. It relaxes the bowels, dampens a dry constitution, helps some cases of throat

ulcerations, reduces the irritations of dry cough, and benefits cases of spitting blood (*tuberculosis*).

In general, plain milk is the absolute and most perfect drink for the human body because of the complete nutrition it provides. It enriches the blood, agrees with the newborn needs, and it innately agrees with the human body. On this subject, Ibn 'Abbãss narrated that when God's messenger ﷺ was taken in his Nocturnal Journey to the heavens, the archangel Gabriel, God's peace upon him, brought him a glass of wine and another of milk. When God's messenger ﷺ chose to drink the milk, Gabriel said: "All praises be to Allah who guided you to what is innate (Arb. *fitra* > *Islam*). Had you chosen to drink the wine, your followers would have strayed after you leave them."

Soured milk (cf. *kefir*) is slow to digest, but it mixes well with the humors, and a hot stomach can benefit from it greatly, and digest it easily.

(3) Cow Milk
(*Halïb-ul Baqar*)

Cow milk enriches the body, increases semen, relaxes the intestines, and causes bowel movement. Cow milk is the most balanced and subtle in moderation, and is better than sheep or goat milk in consistency, balance, thickness, richness, and butterfat.

'Abdullãh bin Mas'oud narrated that God's messenger ﷺ said: "Drink cow milk, for cows graze on every kind of plant." (*Sunan*)

(4) Camel Milk
(*Halïb-ul Ibil*)

(*See Treatment of Dropsy*)

Mimosa Tree (*Talh*)*
Acacia gummifera

Mimosa tree, of the mimosa family, grows in warm regions, and usually has bipinnate[1] leaves. *(*See Banana; Plantain; Musa Paradisiaca*)[2]

Miswãk (*Natural Toothbrush*)
Salvadora Indiea

(*See Toothpick; Siwãk*)

[1] Compound leaf with twice as many leaflets, having spikes of small white, yellow, or pink flowers, including the tall, ornamental *Albizia* tree.

[2] The tropical banana plant known as *Musa Paradisiaca*, yielding a coarse fruit eaten as a cooked vegetable. Arb. *Maowz al-Janna*.

Molasses
(*See Syrup of Grapes*)

Motton (*Dhã'n*)
Ovis aries
(*See Meat; Sheep Milk*)

Mountain parsley (*karfas al-jabal*)
Athamanta oreoselinum
(*See Celery*)

Musk (*Misk*)
Muscone

Abi Sa'ïd al-Khidri, God be pleased with him, narrated that God's messenger ﷺ said: "Musk is the best of perfumes." (*Reported in ṣaḥïḥ Muslim*). 'Aisha, God be pleased with her, said: "I perfumed God's prophet ﷺ with an oil that had musk before he wore his pilgrim's cloth, and I did the same on the day of sacrifice, and before he circumambulated God's House." (*ibid.*)

Musk is the king of all perfumes, the most precious scent, and the most gratifying. People compared goodness and virtue with musk in their parables of old. The value of other scents is measured in comparison with musk, for there is no other perfume that is said to be more excellent than musk, and the dunes of paradise are made of musk.

Musk is hot and dry in the second degree. It pleases the spirit, increases vitality, and strengthens the internal organs when taken as a drink or when smelled as a fragrance. Musk also benefits the external organs when used in ointments, and it helps old people during a cold season, particularly those of cold temperament.

The smell of musk is penetrating and persistent. Smelling musk helps to resuscitate someone who suffers from a fainting attack, and it helps to abate irregular acceleration of the heartbeat, or palpitation, and is believed to act as an aphrodisiac. Musk also helps to dry excess dampness in the eye, reduce excessive excretion from the eyes, clear inflammations of the opaque outer white coat of the eye (or the sclera), as well as other infections affecting the clouding of the clear cornea that causes blurring of vision.

Musk also helps to eliminate wind, removes the effects of poison, and accelerates the healing of wounds caused by a snakebite.

Musk is obtained from the sex glands of the male musk deer, a small, tusked, antlerless deer (*Moschus moschiferus*), native to mountainous regions of Siberia to the Himalayas.

The pods from which musk is obtained are lodged in a pouch near the deer's sex organs and contain a substance, the essential ingredient of which is the organic compound muscone. When dried, the substance yields a grainy powder that is prepared for perfume by making a tincture with alcohol.

Myrtle (*Aas*)
(*See Sweet Basil, Raihān*)

Myrtle sedge (*Tharīra; Qasab al-tharīr; 'Ūd al-wajj*)
Hemarthria

It is narrated in *sahīh Bukhāri* that 'Aisha, God be pleased with her, said: "I scented God's Messenger ﷺ with myrtle sedge oil during the farewell pilgrimage twice – once before engaging in a state of ritual consecration (*ihrām*), and once thereafter."[1]

– N –

Narcissus[2] (*Narjis*)
Amaryllidaceae

The genus Narcissus is a spring or fall-flowering herb, popularly known as daffodils, narcissus, or jonquils.

The Narcissus flower is hot and dry in the second degree. Its stalks help harden low-laying boils, or sebaceous cysts with roots that have reached the nerves. The Narcissus plant also has a detergent cleansing and emetic quality.

Eating the cooked flowers and stalks of Narcissus, or drinking its water stimulates vomiting, and pulls up excess dampness from the bottom of the stomach. If Narcissus flower is cooked with ervil, or bitter vetch (Arb. *karsana*) and honey, it helps cure boils, ripens obstinate pimples, and helps the coction of stubborn abscesses.

The Narcissus flower is warm and gentle, and it benefits head colds. Smelling the Narcissus flower opens obstructions in the brain and the nostrils, benefits some cases of epilepsy, reduces headaches caused by cold temperament and imbalance of the black humor. However, Narcissus can also cause headache to people of immoderate hot temperament.

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[1] Also see XXIII Treatment of Pimples and Boils

[2] The narcissus, genus Narcissus, referring to the plant's narcotic properties, of the lily family, is a plant popular for its cheerful-looking, fragrant flowers.

Regularly smelling Narcissus in the winter prevents headache, heaviness of the head, redness of the face, and dislike for bright light, among other symptoms associated with pleurisy. The Narcissus plant also reduces headaches generated by imbalance of the atrabilious and phlegmatic humors.

Narcissus is an aromatic specie that strengthens the heart and the brain, and finally, the author of *al-Taysīr* contended that it cures children's madness.

– O –

Olive Oil (*Zayt Zaytūn*)

The olive tree is a blessed one in the Qur'an, and an olive branch symbolizes a peace offering. Olive oil is extracted from the ripe fruit of the olive tree of the *Oleaceae* family. Its native climate is the Mediterranean basin, and its habitat extends throughout the Middle East and Southern Europe, and is found in the North African countries of Morocco and Tunisia as well.

Abu Huraira, God blessed his soul, narrated that God's messenger ﷺ said: "Use oil as food and as ointment, for it comes from a blessed tree" (*Reported by Imam al-Tirmithi*).

Olive oil is hot and moist in the first degree. The quality of the oil depends on the quality of the olives when pressed. The best is extracted from fully mature olives, and when extracted from unripe olives, it yields moderate cold and dry temperaments. Red olives yield oil of temperaments in between the above, while the oil of black olives provides moderate heat and moisture.

Drinking olive oil benefits in the treatment of food poisoning, moves the bowels, and expels intestinal worms. The older the oil, the higher the degree of its heat and effectiveness in dissolving matters. Besides the pressing method, olive oil also can be extracted through a water separation process, and in that case, its temperament is less hot, mild, and more effective. All kinds of oil soften the skin, and slow down the hair graying process. The salted water of preserved olives benefits skin burns, prevents blistering, strengthens the gums, and is good for herpetiform eruptions, and some allergic skin conditions (e.g., *urticaria*).

The leaves of the olive tree benefit infectious diseases including local skin inflammations when accompanied by fever (*e.g., ambulant erysipelas* > red skin), eczema, and ulcerations caused by rodent bites. Chewing these leaves benefits the treatment of fungal eruption in the mouth (*aphthous stomatitis*) or on the lips, and is used to

treat rodent ulcerations, general itching and skin eruption (*cnidosis*), as well as to control excess perspiration. (*Also see Palm oil*).

Olives (*Zaytün*)
(*See Olive Oil*)

Onager (*Akhdar*)
Equus asinus onager
(*See Meat*)

Onion (*Basal*)
Allium cepa; Porium cepa

Abu Dãwoud narrated in his *sahïh* that 'Aisha, God be pleased with her, replied to a question concerning eating onion, saying: "The last meal God's Messenger ﷺ ate included onions." It is also reported in the two collections of correct prophetic traditions that God's Messenger ﷺ prohibited eating onion before going to the mosque, or to be near the people therein because of the unpleasant odor it leaves.

There are several varieties of onions[1] and all are rich in hydrocarbon. Onions are hot in the third degree, and have a non-nitrogenic extractive material which is beneficial for renewing the body's water. Onions expel toxic odor from the body, cut phlegm, increase sexual drive, give coction to semen, and cleanse the stomach. Onion seeds help in the treatment of leukodermia, and is beneficial when rubbed on the scalp for those who suffer from hair thinning, hair loss (*alopecia areata*), and alopecia. A salve of onion dipped in salt helps remove warts. To smell an onion after taking a cathartic or an unpleasant tasting medicine prevents nausea, vomiting, and eliminates any aftertaste, or after smell (*kakosmia*). To draw in the water of soaked onions through the nose clears the head. Using an onion base solution as ear drops helps in the treatment of loss in hearing sharpness (*amblykusis*), ringing in the ear (*tinnitus*), ear infection, and helps to drain any retained water in the ear. Using a salve made of crushed onion seeds mixed with honey, and applied around the eyes halts excessive tearing which could be caused by weakness of the eye muscles, overheating of the body, or coldness.

Well cooked onions with one's food benefit the treatment of jaundice, coarseness of chest, and coughing. They also increase

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[1] Allium cepa; Porium cepa: The commonest variety of onions. It contains 1.68% nitrogen, 0.10% sebaceous material, 2.78% sucrose, 8.04% non-nitrogenic extractive materials, and 0.71% cellulose.

the excretion of urine, and effect the evacuation of the bowels. Applying onion water mixed with salt and the extract of wild rue, or mountain rue, over a nonmalignant, non-rabic dogbite hastens its cure. Lastly, if one can bear with its sting, it can help to soften and open stubborn hemorrhoids.

Eating raw onions in excess causes migraine headache, flatulence, darkens the vision, causes forgetfulness, harms the understanding, generates bad breath, develop bad taste, and displeases the angels. Chewing wild rue leaves can eliminate the bad breath caused by eating raw onions. Hence, eating it well cooked can eliminate all of the above. It is also reported in the prophetic traditions that God's Messenger ﷺ has instructed people to cook onions and garlic before eating them.

Opening Chapter of the Qur'an (*Al-Fãtiha*)
(*See Al-Fãtiha*)

Ovis (*Dhã'n*)
Ovis aries
(*See Meat*)

Oxen (*Jãmous*)
Bos bubalus
(*See Meat*)

– P –

Palm-marrow (*Jummãr*)
Essence of the Palm Tree

This is the heart of the palm tree, or the terminal bud. It is a soft, white, meaty, and sweet tasting edible marrow of the leaf of a palm tree. There is one kind of camphor which is produced from this marrow.

According to 'Abdullãh bin 'Omar, God blessed his soul, while God's Messenger ﷺ was sitting with a group of believers, someone offered him some *Jummãr*, and God's Messenger ﷺ commented: "Among trees, there is one that resembles a Muslim. It is an evergreen that does not shed its leaves" (*Reported by Bukhãri and Muslim*).

Palm-marrow is cold and dry in the first degree. It helps cicatrize festering wounds, and it is beneficial in the treatment of coughing up of blood (*hemoptysis*). Palm-marrow is slow to

digest. It provides a reasonable nourishment for the body, regulates bowel movement in the case of diarrhea, reduces spastic reflux of stomach acid into the esophagus, also known as heartburn, and balances gastric juices. In fact, the entire palm tree is full of benefits. This is the reason why God's Messenger ﷺ compared the palm tree to the blessedness of a true believer, his deeds, and his unceasing benefits to others.

Palm Oil (*Duhn*; *Zayt*)

Palm oil is a yellow or reddish, semisolid, non-edible oil which is obtained from the fruit of the oil palm tree and is used in making soap and candles, and ointments.

Imam al-Tirmithi narrated in *Kitãbu-Shamã'il,* a saying of Anas, God blessed his soul, that God's messenger ﷺ liked oils for food and as ointment, and he used palm oils on his beard and hair, and often applied palm oil to his face to the extent that sometimes one would think that he was wearing the garb of an oil vendor.

Oil is a necessary supplement for the body and is extracted from the seeds of varying plants. Most seeds contain oil, and their compositions carry varying amounts of fat and acid. Some oils are extremely beneficial, while others maybe harmful. In a cold climate, oil seeds contain mostly unsaturated fatty acids.

As ointment, palm oil seals the pores and stops the undesired breakup or dissolution of substances the body sometimes needs. Applying palm oil after a hot bath cools the body and helps to preserve the skin. Palm oil helps hair growth and preserves its health. Abu Huraira narrated that God's messenger ﷺ said: "Use oil as food and as ointment" (*Reported by Imam al-Tirmithi*). Palm oil in hot climates is particularly essential for people's health. In cold climates, oil and fat are less necessary, and may even be harmful. Applying it excessively to the scalp is dangerous for one's vision.

The best oils are those that contain less fatty substances, although purified butter (Arb. *Samna*) and sesame oil are beneficial and are considered simple remedies. As for the compound oils, some are cold and humid such as the violet oil (*Viola odorata;* Arb. *Banafsaj*), which is used as an ointment for migraine headache. It also benefits sufferers of insomnia, cools the brain, accelerates the healing of skin fissure, and benefits most herpetiform eruptions and allergic skin conditions, including itching, burning sensation, stinging, and the formation of smooth red patches (e.g. *urticaria*).

An ointment of violet oil also benefits mange, itching, scabies, arthrosis, and calms hot tempered people, particularly during the summer season. There are several kinds of violet plants designating the family of Violales, and some have three, four, or five-part flowers.

Some medicinal oils are hot and humid such as that of the Ben-oil tree (Arb. *Duhn al-Bãn*; *Moringa pterigo perma*) which oil is extracted from the seeds and not the flower. This oil is extremely beneficial and forms no oxidation or acidity. Ibn Sïna contended that Ben-oil benefits leprosy, freckles chloasma, leukoderma, and verruca warts (*verrucosis*). Ben-oil also benefits sufferers from hardening of the nerves and arteriosclerosis, and can be used in the treatment of *urticaria*, freckles, loosens thick phlegm, and warms up the nerves. Other benefits of Ben-oil also include whitening of the teeth and stopping their tarnishing or discoloration, while applying it to the loins area benefits cold intemperament of the kidney and difficulty of urination.

Palm Tree (*Nakhl*)
Phoenix

Almighty Allah mentions the palm tree in various chapters of the holy Qur'an.

Also in the prophetic traditions (*sahïh*), it is reported that 'Abdullãh bin Omar, God be pleased with them both, said: "We were sitting with God's messenger ﷺ when someone came and offered some palm-marrow. Shortly after that, God's messenger ﷺ asked the following question: 'Among trees, there is one that resembles a Muslim, and it does not shed its leaves. Tell me, what tree is it?' People cited names of different evergreen trees, and I thought that this could be the palm tree. I looked up, and found myself the youngest, so out of respect, I kept quiet. When the thought crossed my mind, God's messenger ﷺ then said: 'It's the palm tree.' Later on, I mentioned what happened to my father (Omar who was also present), and he replied: 'Had you given the answer then, it would have been dearer to my heart than such and such...' " (*Reported in sahïh Muslim*).

There is a training in this prophetic tradition, a teacher must learn. He must know how to quiz his students and how to test their knowledge by using parables and allegories. In this narration one also learns about the companion's reverence and respect for the station of God's messenger ﷺ, and hence their refraining from advancing their knowledge in his presence. Also, one learns

from this tradition about the nobility of the companions, their mutual respect, the high esteem they held for their elders, and for the notable ones among the prominent companions of God's messenger ﷺ, upon whom be peace. There is also the happiness a father must have when his child is right, and that the child may respectfully offer his or her understanding in the presence of the father, even when the father does not know.

The above tradition also makes a comparison between a Muslim and a palm tree. The tree is an evergreen. Its fruits are abounding, and its shade is constant. Its fruit are beneficial, and are used or eaten when fresh, dry, preserved, or even unripened. In fact, the product of the palm tree is considered to be nutrition, medicine, food, sweets, drink, and fruit. Its branches are used for construction, tools, and vessels. Its leaves are used to make straw mats, baskets, utensils, and fans, among other beneficial uses. The fibers of the palm tree are used in manufacturing ropes, and are used for making mattresses, and pillows, among other household items; and finally, the date pits are used as fodder for camels, as well as in medicinal preparations and kohl for the eyes. The beauty of a palm tree, its compactness, clusters of dates, fresh look, and benefits render the heart of the onlooker happiness. They remind him of its Creator, Almighty God, Who, in His infinite wisdom, has perfected it, fashioned its beauty, and originated its benefits, and hence, there is nothing that resembles it better than a believer. In fact, a Muslim is a mirror to such benefits, both inwardly and outwardly.

Furthermore, it is the trunk of the palm tree on which, God's messenger ﷺ leaned when he stood to deliver his sermon in the mosque, and it is that trunk that cried out loud when he left it to deliver his sermons from a modest pulpit of five steps high that the companions built for him. The tree then cried out, yearning for his physical nearness and blessed touch, and every one present for that sermon heard its cry, loud and clear. And finally, it was a palm tree under which shade Mary gave birth to Jesus, upon whom be peace.

However, some commentators differ in opinion regarding the prominence of the palm tree and that of a vineyard, or the grape tree. Yet both of them have their virtues and benefits, depending on the soil where they grow — God knows best.

Papyrus (*Burdi*)
(*See Treatment of Wounds*)

Parsley; Horse parsley; Wild celery (*karfas barri*)
Smyrnium olusatrum
(*See Mountain parsley*)

Partridge (*Hajal*)
Perdriz
(*See Meat: II Fowls*)

Patience (*Sabr*)

Exercising patience constitutes half of one's faith in God Almighty. Patience is comprised of steadfastness, forbearance, and gratitude. Some of our predecessors have even said: "Half of one's faith is patience, and the second half is gratitude."

On this subject, God Almighty commanded Moses, peace be upon him, to guide his people out of darkness into light, to teach them virtues, and to remind them of the days of Allah. He said: ❮ Surely, in that are clear signs for everyone who perseveres in patience, and who is thankful (to his Lord) ❯ (*Qur'an 14:5*).

The importance of patience in relationship to faith in God Almighty is equivalent to that of the head in relationship to the body.

There are three categories of patience: (1) Steadfastness in observing the obligatory religious duties so that they will not be lost or served lightly; (2) perseverance in abstaining from desiring or committing what God Almighty forbade; and (3) to have resolve and determination in consenting to the divine will and accepting the divine judgment without resentment or discontent. Whoever complies with these three conditions has indeed tasted the ultimate pleasure of savoring the virtues of patience, and he will rightly enjoy the true benefits of life in this world and in the hereafter. In fact, no one can attain such victory and success except by crossing the grand bridge of patience, just as no one will enter paradise unless he walks the straight path and crosses its sublime straight bridge (*sirãt*) in the hereafter.

Omar bin al-Khattãb, may God be eternally pleased with him, said: "The best living conditions we have ever attained, was accomplished through steadfastness and patience."

If one contemplates the most perfect achievements in this world, he will surely find that their accomplishments are marked with utmost patience. By contrast, if one notices mediocre achievements and common failures in this world, he will find them associated with haste that puts the blame on the people

who headed such projects. Hence, courage, virtue, good quality, and giving preference to what is morally correct, is a magnificent exercise of one hour of patience in this life. An Arab poet once said:

Patience is the talisman and the seal of the divine treasury.
Whoever identifies its code,
Will gain admission to the divine treasury.

On the other hand, the majority of illnesses of the body, the mind, and the heart are caused by the absence of patience and steadfastness. Some illnesses are physical, and others are psychological. In fact, patience is the primary medicine which is conducive to preserving good health and soundness of heart, body, mind, and soul.

Patience is the momentous and unparalleled criterion of discernment between right and wrong, and it is the ultimate and supreme medicine and cure (*theriaca*). Its reward is God's blessings, nearness, love, and guardianship of its people in this world and in the hereafter. He says: ‹ Allah is the protecting guardian Who is near those who exercise patience› (*Qur'an 8:46*). In fact, Allah loves those who are steadfast in their patience. He rewards them with success, victory, and paradise, and there are no other avenues to such attainments besides exercising patience. Patience is good for its people, ‹ If you persevere with patience, it will be rewarding for its people › (*Qur'an 16:126*), and He also says: ‹ O people who believe (in God): Endure (your trials) with steadfastness; persevere in patience, and observe your duties to Allah strictly, so perhaps you may attain success › (Qur'an 3:200).[1]

Perfume (*Teeb*)

Teeb-ul 'Arab al-Ithkher

God's messenger ﷺ said: "There are three things in your world that are made to attract my affection: women, perfume, and then, my ultimate fondness is securely fixed on prayers."

God's messenger ﷺ enjoyed using perfume extensively, while malodor and fetidness irritated his genteel and exceptional nature. His house was most fragrant. Entering it was most pleasing to one's heart and soul, for therein lived the most blessed and most exalted of God's creation, and the seal of God's messengers, upon all of whom be peace, to whom came the final divine revelation to guide humanity out of darkness into light.[2]

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[1] Also see Prayers; fasting.
[2] Cf. 7. His Home, pp. 185.

Perfume is food for the soul and the spirit. Just as food and drink provide the essential nutrients for the body and maintain its strength, perfume also holds the essence of physical strength, which increases manifold when imbued with it. Perfume provides the body and the spirit with comfort, happiness, and beneficial social associations, spreads love among people, promotes good intentions, and entices people to speak good about others who use fragrance in their absence.

By contrast, association with a dull and an unbearable person who imposes himself on others weakens the spirit and physical strength, and causes the soul and the spirit stress and worries. Such involuntary or imposed associations intrude upon the spirit and irritate it just as malodor and fetidness can cause nausea and discomfort. In fact, a self-imposed visit of a dull and unbearable person is just like a headache and fever to the body.

This is why God Almighty required people to adopt a good protocol in visiting with His messenger ﷺ, and to respect his privacy, for he was extremely courteous and accommodating, and he never asked a visitor to leave, even if their visit caused discomfort to his feelings or inconvenienced him. God Almighty said: ‹ Do not enter the house of the prophet unless you are invited, and if you are offered food, then leave soon after eating, and do not linger therein for the sake of a mere conversation, for this annoys the prophet, and he shies to ask you to leave, but Allah does not shy to speak the truth › (*Qur'an 33:53*).

In essence, concerning the subject of perfume and good fragrance versus malodor, perfume is considered a preventive medicine, is excellent for cold temperaments, and can repel many illnesses because of its strong nature. (*Also see Ginger grass, and other herbs and fragrances*).

Pignolia (*Arz*; *Sanobar*)
(*See Pine Kernel*)

Pine Kernels; Fir (*Arz*; *Sanobar*)
Pignolia; Piñion

God's Messenger ﷺ spoke of the pine tree, saying: "The parable of a believer is like that of the stem of a young plant; the breeze moves it up one time, and gently bends it at another time; and the parable of a hypocrite is like that of a pine tree, it stands up firmly against the winds until it suddenly dries up and dies."

The seeds of the fir tree are hot and wet. They heat the body and help coction. The nuts act as a mild aperient, and they can

cause heartburn, except if blanched in freshwater before eating, while blanching also improves their taste. Pine nuts are hard to digest, although they are highly nutritional. They help to suppress cough, clear excess moisture in the lungs, although they increase semen and the desire for sexual intercourse. To balance them, one can eat the sour variety of pomegranate. (*See Pomegranate*).

Pine nut
(*See Pine Kernel*)

Plantain;[1] Plantago
Banana > Musaceae
Musa x Paradisiaca

The genus Plantago in the plantain family, a stemless, perennial commonly called plantains. (*See Banana*)

Pomegranates[2] (*Rummãn*)
punica granatum

Pomegranates (*lit.*, having seeds) are mentioned in the holy Qur'an. In His description of the creation of the earth and what it contains to serve human needs, God Almighty mentions: ❮ Fruits, palm trees, and pomegranates ❯ (*Qur'an 55:68; ibid. 6:141; 6:99*).

Ibn 'Abbãss, God blessed his soul, narrated that God's messenger ﷺ said: "There is not a pomegranate of yours that is not cross-fertilized by a seed of a pomegranate from paradise." Also in a tradition by 'Ali, God bless his countenance, he said: "Eat the pomegranate whole with its flesh, for it coats the stomach."

Sweet pomegranate is hot and moist, it benefits the throat, lungs and bronchi, acts as a cough depressant, and is good for the bile. Pomegranate also benefits the stomach, acts as mild laxative, prevents corruption of bread in the stomach, and is superior to similar categories of food as a source of broad nutritional values for the entire body. Pomegranate dissolves in the stomach and converts easily because of its delicateness and mild temperament, it gently warms up the stomach, expels stomach gases, and increases semen, however, eating pomegranate is harmful when having a fever.

A sour pomegranate is cold and dry, it acts as a mild astringent, it helps cure inflammations of the stomach lining, and it increases the excretion of urine more than other varieties of pomegranate.

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[1] Cf. Banana.

[2] Pomegranates contain 14% sucrose, 17,57% extractive materials, 0.30% sebaceous material, 0.52% protein, 0.17% citrus, and 0.73% vegetable ashes.

Sour pomegranate also soothes the bile, arrests bowel discharge, prevents vomiting, strengthens the stomach, softens excrements, cools intemperament of the liver, increases body tone, quietens down bilious palpitation, benefits occasional pain associated with the heart, reduces aches associated with the stomach cardia, and reverses the biliousness of the yellow bile and the blood.

Applying a paste made of cooked pomegranate juice with its flesh, and mixed with a little honey to the eyelids benefits in the treatment of yellowness of the cornea, and cleanses the eyes of thick humors caused by intemperament of the yellow bile or the phlegm. Applying the abovementioned paste to the lips also helps against recurrent gangrenous sores. Drinking an infusion of pomegranate cooked with its flesh induces bowel movement, flushes away excess intestinal putrid mucus, benefits in the treatment of prolonged tertian fever, and arrests biliousness of the yellow bile and the blood.

As for the bittersweet pomegranate, it is intermediate between the sweet and the bitter of course, and its benefits are nearer to the sour pomegranate. A bandage of pomade of pomegranate seeds mixed with honey accelerates the healing of infected nails and nail bed, commonly known as 'whitlow' (Arb. *dãhiss*), bilious ulcerations, and small tumors of the skin (*xanthoma*).

The blossoms of a pomegranate tree (Pers. *jullanãr*) are used in *tibb* as a costive, as an anthelmintic to kill intestinal worms, and for killing and ejecting tapeworm.

Eating the pith of a pomegranate dyes the stomach green. A popular tradition goes as far as to say that eating even three pomegranates a year can prevent conjunctivitis for that year — God knows best.

Prayers (*Salãt*)

God Almighty says: ‹ Do not be hasty, pray with constancy, although offering prayers is hard except for the humble ones › (*Qur'an 2:45*). ‹ O believers! Strengthen your perseverance with patience and with the help of prayer, for Allah assists those who persevere with patience ¤ (*Qur'an 2:153*). ‹ Enjoin on your family to establish regular prayers, and persevere in it. We do not ask you to provide for Us—We provide for you, and piety receives the utmost favorable outcome › (*Qur'an 20:132*).

According to recorded prophetic traditions, whenever God's messenger ﷺ was confronted with adverse circumstances, he solicited the divine guidance through prayers. Earlier in this book, we

elucidated the advantages of prayers in curing illnesses, and how to control suffering and pain before illness takes hold of the person.

Regular prayers are the vehicle that delivers one's daily bread in this world, and they are one's true earnings in the hereafter. In fact, prayers preserve one's health, repel harm, protect against illnesses, rejuvenate the heart, radiate the face with a favorable light, soothe the soul, comfort the mind, dispel laziness and sluggishness, refresh the body, renew one's energy, expand one's wisdom and extend perception, nourish the soul, enlighten the heart, lessen the hardship associated with earning one's livelihood, bring divine blessings to one's earnings, halt the divine wrath, bring blessings into one's environment, distance one's environment from the systematic satanic attempts to lead the believers astray, and prayers bring one closer to the merciful Lord.

Regular prayers have magnificent and astounding effects in preserving good health and strengthening the heart. They cleanse one's system of harmful excesses, and enhance balance and promote moderation. In fact, whenever two people face the ramifications of a misadventure they undertook, chances are that the one among them who regularly observes his prescribed daily prayers may suffer the lesser share of such calamity, and consequently, his reckoning in the hereafter may be more promising. Observing one's prescribed prayers also proffers miraculous results in repelling evil trials associated with one's ephemeral life in this world. This is particularly true when one's performance is guided by, and is compounded with the correct attendance, both outwardly and inwardly. In fact, there is nothing that can repel the evil of this world, distance one from the torment of sinners in the hereafter, draw one closer to his true interests, answer his supplications, and satisfy his aspirations, both in this world and in the hereafter better than prayers.

This is because prayers (Arb. *Salãt*) are the primary connecting channel (*silah* > pl. *silãt*) between the servant and his Lord, his creator and sustainer. Hence, prayers open to the servant the gates of blessings, benefits, and divine favors, and they close the doors to evil and its suggestions. Prayers provide and engulf the servant with the divine guidance, guide him in the right direction, and supply him with the elements of success, good health, welfare, well-being, satisfaction, comfort, bliss, true pleasures, and real happiness, all of which will race to the servant's side, encompass him, and continuously serve his needs. (*Also see Patience; fasting; Benefits of Ritual Prayers*)

Precipitation
(*See Rainwater*)

Pseudo-saffron (*Waras*)
(*See Kamala Tree*)

Pterocles (*Qutã*)
(*See Meat: II Fowls*)

Pumpkin (pl. *Qara'*; singl. *Qur'a*)
(*See Gourd*)

– Q–

Quails (*Summãnĩ*; *Salwã*; *Sifrid*)
Cotrnix; Crex pratensis
(*See Meat: II Fowls*)

Quince (*Safarjal*)
Pyrus cydonia

Talha bin 'Ubaidullãh, God blessed his soul, said: "I visited God's messenger ﷺ who had a quince in his hand, and he offered it to me, saying: 'Take this O Talha and eat it, for it is a tonic that musters the strength of the heart, lifts up one's spirit, satisfies one's desire for food, dissipates uptightness of the chest, and softens the heart" (*Narrated by al-Nisã'i and in Sunan Ibn Mãja*).

Quince is an apple-shape fruit of the small tree *Cydonia oblonga* of the rose family, and is used in cooking and in preserves. Quince is cold and dry in varying degrees depending on its taste. However, quince is a strong astringent and is good for the stomach. The sweet variety of quince is less cold and is closer to mild, while the sourish or acidulous quince is more constipating, dry, and cold.

All varieties of quince assuage thirst, stop vomiting, increase the excretion of urine, balance the temperament, benefit in treating ulcers of the intestines, check the flow of menses, help lactation and increase the flow of breast milk, reduce nausea, and soothe the skin and the membrane.

Eating a quince after a meal softens the stomach, acts as an aperient, abates the biliousness and concentration of the yellow bile in the stomach, and prevents vapors from rising. Eating a quince before a meal renders it a strong astringent. Quince also

accelerates the passage of chyme and other sediments through the intestines, however, eating it in excess can generate colic and harm the nerves. Eating a quince broiled renders it less astringent, and renders it lighter on the stomach. Hollowing out a quince, removing its seeds, and filling it with honey and pure natural clay, and then placing it inside hot ashes for curing makes it an excellent electuary.

It is best to eat quince broiled or cooked with honey. The seeds of this fruit is beneficial for the trachea, sore throat, and cough, among other uses. Applying an ointment of quince arrests perspiration, sustains the veins, and strengthens the stomach.

As preserves, quince strengthens the stomach and the liver, acts as a tonic for the heart, dissipates uptightness of the chest, relaxes the heart, and opens blood passages.

Qur'an
The Holy Qur'an

Almighty Allah says: ❮ What We reveal of the Qur'an is a cure and (a divine) mercy for the believers ❯ (*Qur'an 17:82*). This verse particularly elucidates the kind, nature, and purpose of the divine revelation, and is not intended to separate people between believers and disbelievers, for in another verse, God Almighty addresses all humanity, saying: ❮ O people, here comes to you an admonition from your Lord, and a cure for the hearts ❯ (*Qur'an 10:57*).

Hence, the Qur'an is the perfect cure for all the diseases of the heart, the body, and the mind, and it is the absolute medicine and treatment of all afflictions in this world, and safeguard against punishment for one's sins in the hereafter. However, not everyone qualifies or is suited to benefit to the full extent of such perfect medicine, and not everyone meets the exalted standard of excellence required for effecting the perfect cure. Nevertheless, when the patient has true faith — when he applies the medicine to his particular illness with faith, trueness, sincerity, truthfulness, trust in his Lord, unquestionable acceptance, consent, and an unwavering certitude and trust in the medicine's effectiveness — when he complies with all the conditions of the divine prescription, then God willing, no diseases can overcome him except death.

Otherwise, how can any abnormal syndrome resist the command of the Lord Who defined its particular function, sphere, and role. In other words, the Qur'an is the holy revealed words of the Creator and Sustainer of the earth, the heavens, and everything they contain. Should the holy utterances descend upon a mountain,

they would cause it to tremble, and, sometimes, to crumble out of fear and reverence for the Lord of the universe, and should it descend upon the earth, it will cause it to tremor. Therefore, there is not a disease of the heart, the body, or the mind the Qur'an does not diagnose the cause, and prescribe the perfect medicine, and such perception is reserved for someone who is blessed with wisdom, knowledge, and understanding of God's revealed Book.

In fact, earlier in this book, we spoke at length on the subject of the Qur'anic guidance with respect to maintaining good health, preventive medicine, the treatment of illnesses, the correct purgation method of what is harmful, and with respect to soliciting further guidance in diagnosing particular diseases.

As for the diseases of the heart, the Qur'an surely interprets them in details, and provides for their correct method of treatment and cure. Almighty Allah says: ❮ Isn't it enough (mercy) for them that We revealed the Book to you, so that it may be rehearsed unto them?❯ (*Qur'an 29:51*). Therefore, whoever suffers from an illness of the heart and cannot find its cure in the Qur'an, then there is surely no cure for him, and whoever is not sufficed with the Qur'an to prevent such an illnesses, then there is absolutely nothing in this world that can fully cure him.

– R –

Rabbit (*Arnab*)
Oryctolagus cuniculus
(*See Meat*)

Rainwater (*Ghaith*)
Precipitation; Abundant rain; Falling rain

Precipitation, or rain falling abundantly has a sweet sound to an Arab's ear (*ghaith*, from the root of the word *ghouth*),[1] and it means help, or succor, and refers to the divine when it comes to help the dwellers of a dry and arid desert. When it falls, it is a lifesaver, and it represents the creation's constant need for all the essential supplies provided by their Lord and Creator. It also reminds the believers of God Almighty. Rain quickens the earth and sprouts new life, and its name in Arabic *ghaith* (precipitation) is gentle to the ear, it soothes the heart, calms

[1] God, from Indo-European *ghou-*, to call out to, to seek the help of, to invoke, (*Webster New World Dictionary 1988*). The closest word to the I.E. word *ghou-* in Arabic is *ghouth*, which also means the one you call out to, seek the help of, and invoke.

the fear, assures continuity, and both the body and the soul are comforted with it.

Precipitation water is blessed, and is soft, fresh, healthy, and is better than ordinary city water. This is particularly true when such precipitation issues from thunderous clouds.[1] Precipitation collects in catchment areas in the mountains, and they supply the streams and rivers, and through infiltration galleries, they replenish groundwater and reappear in springs, wells, basins, and cribs.

Precipitation water is more humid that regular water, for it would have not aged during the cooling process in natural underground reservoirs. Hence, precipitation water is less polluted or modified by natural phenomena, such as the concentration of natural atmospheric pollutants or certain types of small particles of dust, or other airborne materials. In fact, precipitation water is delicate, and it deteriorates rapidly upon mixing with external stimulus.

Some commentators consider spring precipitations to be superior to winter precipitations. Others claim that winter precipitations also have their advantages, because during winter, the weather is cooler, the air is less saturated, the temperature of the sun is less hot, and the air quality is cleaner, hence, the condensation and rising of water vapors from the sea detracts undesirable particles which are left behind when sea spray evaporates. On the other hand, those who prefer spring precipitations contend that the higher temperature of sun-heat during spring helps dissolve thick and harmful vapors, dissolved unwanted solids carried by the evaporation of water, and eliminates air saturation with undesirable pollutants. In their opinion, spring precipitations take place during germination and growing season, bringing new life to plants and trees, and therefore, their water is healthier than that of winter participation — God knows best.

Imam al-Shãfi'i, God be pleased with him, reported that Anas bin Mãlik, God bless his soul, said: "We were with God's messenger ﷺ when precipitation began falling. God's messenger ﷺ immediately took off his turban and anointed himself with it, saying: 'It is a new creation that (upon it's birth) became familiar with its Lord (and Creator).' " *(Also see Water)*

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[1] Perhaps this description applies to earlier times, when air was not vitiated by chemical and poisonous pollutants, which are driven nowadays by greedy, selfish, and careless industries.

Raisins[1] (*Zabīb*)
Dried grapes

Raisins are made of seedless dried sweet grapes. Traditionally, raisins are dried in the sun or by some artificial method. The best raisins are made of whole large and fleshy grapes with thin skin, and sometimes the seeds of regular grapes are removed in the process of drying them. The flesh of raisins is hot and moist in the first degree, and the seeds are cold and dry. Like grapes, some are sweet and hot, and others are sour and cold. Raisins made of white grapes are more costive than others.

Raisins benefit the windpipe, and they help in the treatment of recurrent cough, relieve kidney ache (*nephralgia*) and bladder ache, strengthen the stomach, and promote bowel movement.

Sweet raisins are more nutritious than grapes, and they are less nutritious than dried figs. Raisins are costive as well as digestive, and yet, they are mild, they promote coction, benefit the stomach, the liver, and the spleen, they relieve slackness of the throat, abate chest pain, and control those of the kidney and the bladder.

Although raisins have good nutritional value, however, they do not satisfy hunger as dates do for example. Seedless raisins are balanced and are more beneficial than other varieties. Eating raisins with their seeds promotes bowel movement, rejuvenates the livers and the spleen, and restores the liver to its natural capacity and functions, and sweet raisins agree well with people suffering from excess phlegm and humidity in their stomach.

Bandaging loose nails due to infection of the nail bed (*onychoptosis*), hangnail, or trauma, among others, with the flesh of raisins can accelerate their falling, and eases their removal.

Imam al-Zahri once said: "Eating raisins increases one's memory." The Caliph Al-Mansūr reported that his grand father 'Abdullāh bin 'Abbāss said: "Raisins' seeds on their own can cause various disorders, while the flesh of raisins contains the remedy."

Some traditions of questionable origins, which are incorrectly attributed to God's messenger ﷺ, also contend that eating raisins balances the phlegm, freshens the breath, alleviates fatigue, calms nervousness and irritability, strengthens the nerves, subdues anger, rectifies a hot constitution, and clarifies the complexion.

Rancid Butter
(*See Purified Butter*)

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[1] Raisins have a high nutritional value, and are rich in carbohydrates, as well as several minerals, vitamins that provide the body with protein, fat, and moisture.

Rectified Salt (*Milh*)
(*See Salt*)

Red truffle (*Maghroud; Kam'a ahmar*)
Tuber; Ascomycetous fungi
(*See Truffle*)

Reed (*Qasab*)
(*See Sugar Cane*)

Rice (*Aruz*)
Oryza sativa

Rice is a starchy[1] grain of grass that grows in warm climates. Brown rice is different from white rice in consistency after cooking, and they are distinct in nutritional value[2] and taste.

Rice is the most nourishing grain food after wheat, and it has an excellent temperament. Rice binds the bowels slightly, and it coats and strengthens the stomach. Some *hakïms* claim that rice is the most nutritious food, particularly when cooked with cow milk, where it becomes less constipating, and eating rice with sugar dissolves swellings. Eating rice regularly promotes salubriousness, increases fertility, and helps the body to produce more semen.

There is a prophetic tradition that says: "The master of your food is meat, and rice comes second." It must be noted here that there are two apocryphal sayings in reference to rice which are falsely attributed to God's Messenger ﷺ, and they run as follows, 'If rice was a man, he would be tolerant,' and the second imported tradition says, 'Rice has curative powers and carries no illness.'

– S –

Saffron; Crocus (*Z'afarãn*)

Saffron is derived from the stigmas of the crocus flower which blooms during autumn, and is used as medicine, as a source of yellow dye, and in food seasoning, where it imparts a slightly bitter flavor, and a yellow color to poultry, fish, and rice.

Saffron is hot and dry, it expels gases, heightens the energy, quells coughs, and increases sexual desire. Saffron also clarifies the eyes, helps conjunctivitis, strengthens the nerves, rejuvenates

[1] Rice contains nearly 85% starch, 2% nitrogen, 1% fatty substances, and 12% water.
[2] Rice is rich in vitamins E, and most of the B vitamins, protein, calcium, phosphorus, fiber, and iron.

the heart, benefits insomnia, stimulates the excretion of urine, stimulates menstrual period, and eases anomalous labor disorder and complications during delivery.

'Abdullāh bin Omar, God be pleased with him reported that God's messenger ﷺ forbade the wearing of garments dyed in saffron. (*Also see Kamala Tree*)

Salt (*Milh*)
Table salt
Sodium chloride

Anas, God be pleased with him, narrated that God's messenger ﷺ said: "Salt is the master of your food." (*Reported in Sunan Ibn Māja*).

Master here means stabilizer, architect, or the principal substance, and the one that plays a dominant role in affecting others. That is what master means, and in that sense, food is regulated with salt, and most food do not balance unless they contain salt.

In another prophetic tradition, God's messenger ﷺ said: "Perhaps, there will come a day when you (the believers) will be in the midst of people like salt in the food, and nothing balances food better than salt." (*Reported in Masnad al-Bazzār*).

'Abdullāh bin Omar, God be pleased with him and with his father, said: "Almighty God sent down four blessings from the skies: Iron, fire, water, and salt." (*Narrated in Tafsīr al-Bughawi*).

Salt is necessary to sustain the processes of life.[1] Salt is an essential dietary constituent, and is used in seasoning food and as a preservative. Salt supplement iodine intake in diets, and thereby prevents the disorder goiter. The characteristics of salt dominate anything mixes with it, and they supersedes it. This includes gold and silver, and that is why phosphate is used in polishing them.

Salt helps evacuation, decomposition of solid food, transfer of nutrients, elimination of excess moisture in the body, drying of pyknotic dampness, strengthening of the constitution, preservation of the body, and it helps in preventing putrefaction and toxicity.

Salt helps to prevent scabies and boils, and it controls skin rashes. Administering a fomentation of salt and cumin helps to

[1] Salt is essential to the energy-transfer reactions. The sodium component of salt operates in regulating osmotic pressures in the body, and helps prevent excessive water loss. The sodium and chloride components also play a major role in the transmission of impulses in nerves, and biologically speaking, blood is a saline solution.

remove excess skin flaps growing on the eyelid, and rock salt is more potent for this purpose. Salt also helps to control the spread of malignant ulcerations, and it relieves gastrointestinal malabsorption which can develop into inflammation of the digestive tract, also known as crohn's disease.

Excess intake of salt can cause fluid retention (*edema*) and can contribute to hypertension, which is a circulatory disorder. Massaging the stomach of someone suffering of distention of the abdomen with a solution made of salt, or a fomentation of such solution, helps to reduce excess fluid in cells and tissues.

Rock salt is also a major source of sodium and chlorine. Gargling with a solution made of salt can prevent tooth decay, it strengthens the gums, cures mouth sores, reduces mouth infections, besides other numerous benefits. A mild deficiency in salt can cause fatigue, weakness, and a decreased attention span. A severe deficiency of salt may lead to seizures, coma, or even death. (*See Meat: II Fowls*)

Sanders
(*See Sandal Wood*)

Sand partridge; Bonham's (*Qabaj*)
Perdriz; Perdix
(*See Meat: II Fowls*)

Senna (*Sanna*)
Cassia

We spoke earlier about the senna leaves under the section '*Dryness of Temperaments*'. Commentators on the prophetic traditions are divided with regard to the meaning of the Arabic word *Sanna*, and they attribute it to mean either (1) honey; (2) a variety of cumin called in Arabic: *kammün karmãni*; (3) the essence of fat which accumulates as fine dark lines on top of ghee; (4) a fruit similar to date, or even (5) a variety of fennel (*feniculum*) called (Arb. *rãzyanj*; or *shomãr*).

However, for the purpose of this study, it must be noted here that dried senna leaves, and the fruits of various kinds of senna plants were formerly used as a laxative, including the cassia tora plant, the cassia corymbosa, and the Meccan senna (*Sanna Makki*).

Senna is hot and dry in the first degree. The best senna is the Meccan variety, which is a blessed and a safe plant. Besides its use as a mild laxative, senna's other benefits include purification of

the yellow and black bile, and is used in the treatment of angina of the heart (*angina pectoris*), black jaundice, hepatitis, herpes simplex, cracking of the skin, migraine headache, hair loss, lice, scabies, skin pimples, itching, and epilepsy, and for relaxing muscle tension.

Other secondary aperients include cumin, aniseed, rosemary, frankincense, and fennel (*feniculum officinale*), which is also used as diuretic and for the treatment of spasms. Addiction to fennel increases sexual drive, while sexual excess may cause ulceration. As we mentioned earlier in section X,* *Hakïms* recommend taking a spoonful of mixed ground fennel, or any of the abovementioned seeds, mixed with ghee and honey for effecting bowel movement. *(*Cf. X, Dryness of Temperaments: Sanüt*).

Shaddock (*Utroja*)
(*See Citrus*)

Sheep (*Dhã'n*)
Ovis aries
(*See Meat*)

Sheep's Tail (*Ilya*)
(*See Meat*)

Shins (*Qar'a*)
(*See Gourd*)

Silk (*Harïr*)
(*See Wearing Silk for The Treatment of Itch;*)

Silver (*Fidhzha*)

Records of prophetic traditions indicate that God's messenger ﷺ wore a simple silver ring, or a ring with a crown made of silver. Some references even indicate that the cap of the haft of his sword also was made of silver. However, there are no prophetic traditions prohibiting the believers from wearing silver, or using it as ornament. Prohibition only applies to wearing gold, or using it by men, except when used for medicinal purposes. (*Cf. Gold*).

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[1] This imposing prophetic prohibition is perhaps concerned with prolonged ingestion of very small, insoluble, nondiffusible molecules that remain in suspension in a surrounding solid known as colloidal silver. The chemical substance is used as an antiseptic, a germicide, an astringent, a caustic, and is used in water sterilization as well. Ingestion of even small quantities of colloidal silver can cause silver poisoning (*argyria; argyrosis*). Symptoms include a blue coloration of lips and gums as silver is deposited there.

On the other hand, it is authenticated in the collection of correct prophetic traditions, that God's messenger ﷺ forbade the believers to eat or drink in silver or gold plates,[1] (*cf. sahih Bukhãri*). However, women are permitted to wear both silver and gold, although they cannot eat or drink using such vessels.

Silver is one of the secrets and a mystery of God's creation on earth, yet, its psychological province exceeds its real worth. In the mind of people, silver represents richness and honor, and a rich person is somehow respected in the society regardless of his true character, or how he has collected his wealth. The needy seeks him. Vendors wish to sell him their merchandise to him. Entrepreneurs desire to have him invest in their business. Fathers may wish to give their daughter to him in marriage, that is even if he has some gray hair. Rulers look up to his opinion, to his role in supporting their policies, and to his influence on public opinions. Judges trust his testimony, and tax collectors often prod his business. Moreover, in the mind of some people, an old rich person wearing silver ornaments may appear more handsome, fascinating, or alluring, than a young healthy man.

Silver is a medicine that affects happiness, and it relieves stress, sorrow, and depression. Silver is good for the palpitation, and it strengthens a weak heart if included in one's diet (under medical supervision). Silver is also used in the manufacturing of electuaries, it pulls out putrefactive humors (*akhlãt*), and its effects become more potent when mixed with pure honey and saffron. Although the temperament of silver is cold and dry, yet it produces some heat and moisture in the body.

As for its design for the hereafter, God Almighty has created four categories of paradise for His deputies (*awliya*): Two are made of gold, and two are made of silver. However, God's messenger ﷺ said: "Whoever drinks in gold or silver vessels in this world will be dragged on his stomach in hell-fire," (*cf. sahih Muslim*). He also said: "Do not eat or drink in gold or silver vessels, for they are their lot (*i.e., the disbelievers*) in this world, and yours in the hereafter." (*ibid.*)

Some commentators have interpreted the prohibition of using gold and silver for tableware and ornaments in relationship to the principal purpose behind their use in trading as a currency. Others have interpreted the prohibition as effecting pride and arrogance on the part of rich people who wear them, or who use them for tableware or as personal ornaments. Although pride, vanity, and arrogance are prohibited in Islam, yet scholars have

commented that such use can hurt the feelings of the poor and the indigent.

In fact, sometimes people who have weak faith may feel intimidated when they enter the house of a wealthy family, or sit on a table covered with elaborately prepared food, or when they see a beautifully adorned garden, or pass an adorned carriage, etc. — and for such people whose faith is weak, these visual effects can cause them depression, anxiety, distress, questionable conduct, or can drive them to adopt a social behavior that is contrary to that of the believers, and that can lead them astray.

On the other hand, the conduct of rich people who love to adorn themselves with gold and silver is contrary to that of true believers. This is why, God's messenger ﷺ stipulated that gold and silver ornaments are the lot of the disbelievers in this world, who have no faith, and who offer no devotion in this world to receive the benefits in the hereafter, who love and adore this life, who have accepted the temporary satisfaction in this world, and relinquished the permanent bliss and comfort in the hereafter. This is why, gold and silver ornaments are the lot of the believers in the hereafter, for it does not befit them to mix the two comforts.

Smallage (*Karfas nabṯi*)
Apium graveolens
(*See Celery*)

Snake cucumber (*Qitha*; *faqqūs*; *Qitté*; *Qursh'or*)
Curving cucumber
(*See Cucumber*)

Snow (*Thalj*)

Eating snow or ice harms the stomach, the liver, the nerves, and teeth, and it causes thirst because it collects the body's heat. Applying snow or ice externally reduces swelling, eases pain, and abates the sensation caused by a wound, a bruise, or a sting, and temporarily anesthetizes toothache when associated with fever. External application also temporarily stabilizes cuts until they are treated properly. Extended exposure to snow or cold can cause chilblain.

It is reported in the prophetic traditions that God's Messenger ﷺ prayed: "Lord, wash me of my sins with water, snow, and hail." In this prophetic saying there is perfect wisdom and understanding, and it implies that illness must be treated with its antidote. This

is because a sin implies a fiery tendency, and since fieriness connotes fire, therefore, water, snow, and hail will cool one's fieriness, and freeze his soreness, irritation, and temper — all of which are a sickness. For this reason, we cannot say that hot water is better than cold water for removing ills, for cold water can certainly help restore the body's energy and intensify its vigor and tonicity. Furthermore, both snow and hail provide such revitalizing effects. (*Also see Water*)

Spadix (*T̲al'a; D̲abba*)
Fruit of the Palm Tree

God Almighty speaks in the holy Qur'an about some of the manifest signs of the miracle of His creation, and the reward which He reserved for the believers in paradise, saying: ‹ Lofty date-palms with ranged clusters › (*Qur'an 50:10*), ‹ And tilled fields with heavy-sheathed palm trees › (*Qur'an 26:148*).

The Qur'anic term used in the above two verses is *t̲ala'* (adj.) or spadix, which is the product of the palm tree, or its inflorescence — that is the beginning of its blossoming which looks like a group of flowers on a common axis, arranged as a reduced cluster. Such clusters are the fleshy spikes of tiny sessile flowers, enclosed in spathes attached directly to the main stem. *T̲ala'* in Arabic also could mean pollen (*s̲uwãh̲*). In that sense, the expression in the above verse also could refer to the miracle of pollination (Arb. *ta'beer*).[1]

On this subject, T̲alh̲a bin 'Ubaidullãh, God be pleased with him, narrated that he was once walking with God's messenger ﷺ when they saw some men pollinating palm trees. He asked: "What are these men doing?" T̲alh̲a replied: "They are placing male blossoms among the females for pollination." God's messenger ﷺ then said: "I do not think this is the best (method)."[2] The people overheard God's messenger's ﷺ remark, and they immediately stopped pollination. In that year, the palm trees bore no fruit. When the news reached God's messenger ﷺ with regard to people's disapproval, he said: "I am only human. Suppose that what I said was a presumption, and sometimes presumption can fail or supervene. However, when

[1] Palm trees are usually monoecious, bearing both male and female unisexual flowers on the same tree. Some species are dioecious, with separate male and female trees, or polygamous, with both unisexual and bisexual flowers on the same tree. Fruiting occurs after about five years. Loosely branched male and female blossoms grow from the crowns of separate trees, and pollination is done by placing severed male blossoms among the females.

[2] Note the prophecy: whereby machinery now exists to blow pollen up through a tube and produce a more satisfactory results, and less tree climbing.

I say to you 'God Almighty said', accept it, for I do not invent anything about God." (*Reported in sahih Muslim*)

The spadix of date palm benefits in adjusting corrupted semen, and increases sexual desire. It is also said that if a woman inserts some of its pollen into her vagina before sexual intercourse, it eases foetation.

The fruit of the palm tree is cold and dry in the second degree. It strengthens the stomach, and acts as a xerantic that dries out excess dampness in the stomach, and cools febrile blood, although it thickens it, and can cause slackness of the stomach and poor digestion. People of hot temperament do not tolerate spadix in their diet, while those who often add the fruit to their food also require eating a small amount of coarsely grounded grains mixed with hot spices to balance it.

The spadix balances the humors, strengthens the intestines, and its benefits are similar to those of the palm-marrow (*Jummãr*), the fertilized unripe date (*Balah*), and the unpollinated or unfertilized female date (*Busur*).

Eating the fruit of the palm tree excessively can harm to the stomach and bronchi, and sometimes can cause colic. Yet, one can balance such diet by eating purified butter (*ghee*) with it, among other nutrients we discussed earlier.

Sparrow (*'Usfür*)
(*See Meat*)

Sperm whale (*'Anbar*)
(*See Amber; Fish*)

Spleen (*Tahl*)
(*See Meat*)

Steer; Young bullock (*Lahm al-'ijl*)
Bos; Bovins
(*See Meat*)

Suet (*Shahm*)
Tallow

Anas, God be pleased with him, said: "A Jew from Medina once invited God's messenger ﷺ to some food, and he offered him barley bread and melted suet mixed with spices (as condiment)." (*Reported in Masnad Imam Ahmad*)

Suet is the hard fat deposited around the kidneys and loins of cattle, and sheep and is used in cooking. The best of suet is drawn from a fully mature animal. Suet is hot and moist, but is less moist than fat. That is why when both are melted, suet hardens faster.

Suet soothes harsh throat, relaxes the muscles, and can be balanced by eating salt-pickled lemons or ginger with one's meal. Suet of a female goat is the most constipating of all, while suet of a male goat has more heat than that of a female goat — it relieves constipation, and benefits in the treatment of intestinal swelling and colic. Sometimes, suet is also used in enema to treat raw sores or skin abrasion (*paratrima*), intestinal inflammation accompanied with abdominal pain (*dysentery*), or the urge to defecate or urinate with a strain but without success (*tenesmus*). (*Also see Fat*)

Sugar (*Sukkar*)
(*See Honey; Sugar cane*)

Sugar Cane (*Qaṣabu Sukkar*)
Saccharum officinarum
Reed; Common Sugar Cane

The only mention of sugar in the prophetic traditions describes the water of the pond of God's messenger ﷺ in paradise (Arb. *Ḥawdh*), around which the believers will first gather after the resurrection. According to this tradition, this pond 'is more than a month's journey in circumference, its water is whiter than snow, sweeter than sugar, and it is mixed with milk. Whoever drinks from it will never thirst again.' (*Mishkãt, book xxiii, Ch. xii*). From this authentic tradition comes the description, 'its water is sweeter than sugar,' otherwise, there is no other mention of sugar in the prophetic traditions.

Muslim physicians spoke extensively of honey, and sugar was never mentioned in their writings. In fact, Muslim physicians did not know sugar, and it is found nowhere as an ingredient in any of their prescriptions. On the other hand, they knew honey, and they prescribed it appropriately.

Sugar cane[1] is hot and moist. It benefits cough, cuts down excess moisture, and rejuvenate the bronchi and the urinary bladder

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[1] Common refined sugar today comes from sucrose-rich plants which sucrose is converted into crystallized sugar. Most sugar comes from sugarcane and sugar beet. Among less important sources of sugar comes the maple tree sap, sorghum cane, wild date palms, watermelons, and grapes.

The juice of sugar cane also helps induce vomiting, increases the excretion of urine, and enhances the production of semen.

'Affān bin Muslim al-Ṣaffār said that "sucking a little juice of a reed of sugar cane after breakfast brings happiness, and renders cheerfulness to one's spirit for the entire day."

Sucking the juices of roasted sugar cane assuages roughness of the chest and the throat, although it produces wind, and this effect can be eliminated by first peeling and washing it in hot water.

Crystallized sugar is hot and cold. The best is the white transparent variety, and the sugar-candy (Arb. *ṯabarzad*; *ublouj*). The juice of old sugar cane is gentler to the body than that of the new harvest. Drinking boiled juice of sugar cane after removing the froth assuages thirst and quells common cough. However, the juice of sugar cane also can harm the stomach where gastric juices are produced, and such harm can be neutralized by balancing one's diet and drinking lemonade, or similar drinks made of bitter orange (*citrus amara*), or that of saturnine pomegranate. Some people even prefer the juice of sugar cane for sweetener over honey because its taste is less vehement than that of honey. Nevertheless, the benefits of honey are much greater than those of the sugar cane, and God Almighty has made honey a delicious food, and a perfect cure for numerous diseases.

In fact, honey and sugar are not subject to comparison. Honey strengthens the body, preserves its youth, refreshes the spirit, stimulates the livers and the heart, provides the heart with much needed energy and balance, cleanses the arteries, cools the body, helps maintain its natural level of moisture, regulates body temperature, helps dissolve nutritional substances, and it is critical to the process of digestion, and it reduces stone formation, and honey plays a major role in virtually every function of the body.

Honey is an abluent and an aperient, it cleanses the bowels of impurities, opens obstructions of the liver, the kidney, and the bladder, acts as a general preservative, and helps to preserve the potency of salves, among other benefits. Homey also helps to break up excess moisture in the bowels such as in diarrhea, it is good for the aged, it is a cough suppressant, and is used to treat corrupted phlegm in the stomach, to soften the general constitution of the body, and it cures depraved appetite. Honey also helps in the treatment of rabies, dog bites, and is considered as a safeguard against infections. Honey is a detoxicant for drug users, and an antitoxin when used to treat accidental eating of

poisonous plants and it cures head lice and other parasites. Honey softens the hair, acts as a conditioner, and promotes hair growth. It brightens the vision, whitens the teeth, strengthens the gums and eliminates gum diseases. Honey is an excellent replenisher and a solvent. It opens the pores of blood vessels and eases menstrual discharge, forces out phlegm, and opens obstruction of the liver, the kidney, and the bladder, and in general there is nothing that is close to its constitution.

People knew honey since ancient times, and long before they began to process sugar. God's Messenger ﷺ used to sometimes drink an infusion of water sweetened with honey on an empty stomach , in the morning, and such a custom holds ample benefits and subtle secrets. God's Messenger ﷺ said: "Whosoever eats honey (at least) three times per month will meet with no great affliction."

God Almighty says: ❬ From its bellies comes forth a drink of varying colors, wherein is a cure for people. Surely this is a sign for those who ponder ❭ (*Qur'an 16:69*). Surely, Allah is the guardian of success, and He is the All-Knowing Lord. (*Also see Promoting Bowel Movement: The benefits of Honey*).

Swan (*Aouz*)
(*See Meat: II Fowls*)

Sweet Basil (*Raiḫān*; Myrtle; *Ḫabaqa*)
Ocimum basilicum

Raiḫān (Sweet Basil) is mentioned in the holy Qur'an as a synonym of comfort, life, ease, joy, happiness, and delight. Almighty Allah spoke of the successful ones, saying: ❬ And if he is among those who are gathered in the blessed nearness (of their lord) ❀ They receive a (new) breath of life, (and comfort, surrounded by) sweet fragrant aromas, and they dwell in gardens of bliss ❭ (*Qur'an 56:88-89*). He also said: ❬ He established the earth (as abode) for the (multitudes of His) creation ❀ Where fruits and palm trees with stretching swathed[1] branches❀ And where husked grains and scented herbs grow ❭ (*Qur'an 55:10-12*).

Muslim and Bukhāri reported in their respective collections of the correct prophetic traditions (*saḫīḫ*) that God's messenger ﷺ said: "One must not refuse a gift of sweet basil, for it is light to carry, and it holds a pleasant aroma."

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[1] Swathed: Arb. pl. *Akmām*, singl. *Kumm* > (E) Perianth ***n.*** *perianthium* < *peri-* winged + *anthos*, a flower. The outer envelop of a flower.

Usãma, God be pleased with him, narrated that God's messenger ﷺ said: "Is there anyone among you who is ready to roll up his sleeves and embark onto paradise? I swear by the Lord of the Ka'aba that paradise converges on no danger. It is a scintillating, radiant, and an effulgent light, a garden of bliss with fresh and delightful aromas (*raihãn*) of sweet herbs swinging in a gentle breeze, a grandiose palace, and offers continuously floating rivers, a ripened fruit, a meritorious beautiful wife, an auspicious garment, and an eternal dwelling in the most perfect and peaceful abode, with fruits, greens, silk shawls, and a blessed happiness, a lofty residence, and a splendid life. The people answered: 'Indeed O messenger of God, we are ready to strive for it.' He added: 'Say, God willing,' and the people repeated after him: 'God willing' " (*Reported in Sunan Ibn Mãja*).

The *Raihãn* plant includes any of the genus *ocimum*, a fragrant plants of the mint family of sweet fragrant herb. Basil literally means a royal plant (*basileus*: *king*). In north Africa they call the Myrtle plant *raihãn*, and they extract from it an essential perfume oil called Myrtol (*cf.* Myrtle). The dwellers of Arabia also call the Myrtle plant *raihãn,* while the dwellers of Iraq and Syria attribute the name *raihãn* to the holy Basil plant, also known as Monk's Basil (*ocimum filamentosum*).

As for the Myrtle plant, it is cold in the first degree and dry in the second. The Myrtle plant compounds opposing effects. It possesses strong earthly temperament which is cold, yet embodies a subtle heat. Myrtle accelerates dryness or xerantic conditions, and can be used both internally and externally. Myrtle is used as a styptic, and a strong costive to cut diarrhea short, and particularly a bilious diarrhea due to bad temperament of the spleen when brought about by an imbalance of moisture. Myrtle also helps to expel rising hot and moist vapors, it stimulates the heart, eliminates depression, and prevents contagion when inhaled. Sitting in a decoction of Myrtle relieves prolapse of the rectum, or its slipping out of place, and for that matter, it relieves prolapse of the uterus (*prolasus ani; p. uteri*). Sitting in such a decoction also helps to relieve recurrent inflammation of the urinary bladder, benefits the breech and the uterus, and helps in the treatment of atony of the joints.

Soaking crushed fresh leaves of Myrtle in vinegar and applying the mixture to the head stops nose bleeding. Grinding dried Myrtle leaves and dusting the powder sparingly on festering wounds accelerates their drying. Applying a poultice containing Myrtle

powder, or bandaging a limb with the same rejuvenates slackened tissues and weakened muscles. Bandaging infected nails and nail bed, commonly known as 'whitlow' (Arb. *dãhiss*) with a plaster of Myrtle accelerates their healing. Dusting pimples, pocks, or ulcerous sores of the legs and hands with Myrtle powder also benefits their cure. Massaging the body with Myrtle powder stops excessive perspiration, dries up excess residual body moisture, and eliminates mephitic or foul odor of the armpit and general corrupt odor of the body.

Pouring the water of Myrtle leaves on fractured bones, or gently rubbing the area with Myrtle paste after setting them, helps to accelerate their cohesion and healing. Washing one's hair with Myrtle water relieves scaling, itching, and flaking associated with dandruff. Myrtle dries up ulcerous sores and pimples, stops sudden hair loss, and promotes healthier hair and darkens it.

Applying a liniment of Myrtle powder mixed with little water, olive oil, and Damask rose paste benefits in the treatment of ulcerous sores, eczema, acute skin inflammation, skin redness associated with fever (*erysipelas*), itching, skin eruption (*cnidosis*), and hemorrhoids.

Myrtle seeds benefit in the treatment of recurrent spitting and coughing up blood caused by bleeding of the lungs or bronchi (*hemoptysis*). Drinking a decoction of Myrtle seeds coats the stomach, and causes no harm to the lungs or the bronchi, because of its lucidity. Such a drink particularly benefits bowel movement and reduces coughing. Myrtle is considered a diuretic, and it helps against burning on urination. Myrtle is also used to treat tarantula bite and scorpion sting, while using a branch of it as toothpick can cause damage to one's teeth and gums.

Inhaling Persian *Raihãn*, or Wild Basil, known in Arabic as *Habaq*, which is another name for the Myrtle, or *raihãn*, benefits in the treatment of cluster headache, and it cools and moistens sore eyes by mere exposure. Finally, Myrtle in general embodies all four hot, cold, dry, and moist temperaments. It induces sleep, benefits burns, and a plaster of Myrtle strengthens the organs, including the heart, and it benefits in the treatment of illnesses caused by imbalance of the black bile.

Sweet Marjoram; Wild Marjoram (*Marzanjüsh; Mardaqüsh*)
Origanum onites; Majorana hortensis; Majorana

Sweet marjoram is hot and dry in the second degree. Smelling

the plant abates cold headache and other types of headache caused by intemperament of the phlegm, and that of the black bile.

Sweet marjoram is a perennial subshrub (*Ori-Majorana hortensis*) of the mint family, and is cultivated for its fragrant leaves which are used for flavoring, for their aromatic scent, as well as for various medicinal purposes.

Both marjoram and wild marjoram are used to treat indigestion, nausea, cold symptoms, and abdominal pain. They also help in the treatment of rheumatism, and they dissolve catarrh, and open obstructions in the brain.

Marjoram also reduces the pain of menstrual cramps, stimulates menstrual period, and helps foetation, and fertility. A fomentation of grounded marjoram leaves relieves swelling and redness of the inner layers of the eye.

An inunction of marjoram mixed with vinegar also can be used in the treatment scorpion sting. It also relieves backache, pain of the knee, and it is excellent for relieving exhaustion and loss of power.

Addiction to smelling marjoram leaves also can cause dryness of the eyes. Sniffing marjoram powder mixed with bitter almond oil helps sneezing and the opening of nostril passages. Smelling marjoram also helps to expel gases from the stomach, increases the power of smelling, and reduces the pain of trifacial neuralgia.

Swisschard beet (*Silq*)
Leaf-beet; Egyptian chard beet
Beta vulgaris; Beta cicla; Beta vulgaris folliosa

Um al-Munthir daughter of Qays al-Ansãriyyah said: "God's Messenger ﷺ entered my tent with 'Ali who was recuperating from an illness. We had an adjacent palm tree with clusters of dates hanging from it. God's Messenger ﷺ stood up and ate from it, and 'Ali followed suit. God's Messenger ﷺ addressed 'Ali by saying: 'Gently, gently, you are still convalescing.' 'Ali stopped eating. Immediately, I went and prepared a dish of Swisschard beets cooked with barley for him. God's Messenger ﷺ then addressed 'Ali, saying: 'Eat this food. It is more suitable for your present condition.' " (*Narrated in Sunan Ibn Mãja*)

Swisschard beets are hot and dry in the first degree, and some say they are both hot and dry, besides being a gentle aperient, carrying a coolness which also effects decomposition, dilates the vessels, and promotes bowel movement. The dark variety of Swisschard beets act as an astringent. Applying its water to one's

hair helps in the treatment of hair loss (*alopecia*; Arb. *Dã'u tha'laba*) and kills head lice. Applying its water to the skin helps in the treatment of skin discoloration on the face and the chest, and reduces enlarged skin markings (*lichen*), and helps cure verruca warts (*ecphyma*).

Applying a pomade of crushed Swisschard leaves mixed with honey benefits in the treatment of eruption of skin pustules, such as in the case of impetigo.

Adding Swisschard beets to one's diet opens obstruction of the liver and the spleen. The black chard abates convulsion of the stomach, and reduces stomach burns when eaten with lentils. When the white chard is cooked with lentils, they also act as a cathartic, while taking an enema with its water acts as a strong purgative.

Swisschard beets also benefit in the treatment of colic and the bile when mixed with common condiments. When the stalks and leaves of Swisschard beets are cooked with barley, together, they provide the best nourishment for a delicate stomach, and protect the digestive juices against putrefaction. However, when eaten alone, Swisschard beets provide limited nutritional value, generate putrefaction of gastric juices. Eating it excessively generates constipation and bloating, and can produce insulin deficiency (*i.e., diabetes*) and biliousness in the blood (*viremia*, Arb. *harq al-damm*). However, vinegar and mustard with the meal balances such effects. (*Also see Imposition of Abstinence from Food*)

– T –

Tallow (*Shahm*)
(*See Suet*)

Teg (*Jatha*)
Ovis aries
(*See Meat*)

Tongue-grass
Lepidium sativum, Nasturtium
(*See Cress seeds; Hurf*)

Toothpick (*Siwãk; Miswãk*)
Salvadora Indiea
Brushing one's teeth

It is narrated in the two collections of correct prophetic traditions that God's messenger ﷺ said: "If I did not think that it would

be burdensome to my followers (*umma*), I would have ordered them to brush their teeth with a *Miswãk* before each prayer" (*Reported by Bukhãri and Muslim*). He also said: "Brushing one's teeth with *miswãk* is a good hygienic practice that purifies the mouth, and pleases the Lord." God's messenger ﷺ also used to brush his teeth before retiring to bed. It is also reported that he also brushed his teeth with a *miswãk* on his deathbed. Feeling a little sorry for his companions, he once said: "I have burdened you a little with respect to *siwãk*." (*ibid.*)

God's messenger ﷺ was particularly ceremonial about cleaning his teeth with a *miswãk* before taking his ablution for prayers, upon waking up for his supererogatory night prayers (*tahajjud* > *qiyãm*), and before the dawn prayer.[1]

Dental hygiene is most important in *tibb* medicine. Imam Abu Hanïfa said that the best kind of toothbrush (*Miswãk*)[2] is made of the Aloeswood. It renders the speech more eloquent, frees the tongue, generates appetite, clears the brain, and it is better to soak it in rose-water before brushing. (*Cf. Aloeswood; Flossing*)

Brushing one's teeth must be done with toothpicks of a qualified and a beneficial tree. One must not pick a *miswãk* at random or from an unknown tree, for some trees are poisonous, and one must seek the particular variety of wood suitable for this purpose.

There are different kinds of *miswãk*, among them, God's Messenger ﷺ sometimes used a *miswãk* from pomegranate wood, basil wood, or from reed. Aloeswood has a more pleasant tastes than most of them, and is the best for brushing the teeth. However, brushing one's teeth excessively with a *miswãk* can dull their polish, harm the enamel, and render the teeth vulnerable to sheltering bacteria from leftover food in their microscopic pores, hence, eventually developing bad smelling breath (*halitosis*), as well as it aids at harboring corrupt vapors rising from the stomach, due to biliousness or to incomplete digestion. On the other hand, regular and moderate brushing of teeth with a *miswãk* preserves their polish, strengthens their roots, freshens the mouth, improves the taste, renders the speech more eloquent, prevents plaque, clears the brain, generates appetite, increases the desire for food, and maintains proper oral hygiene, and is better when the *miswãk* is used after soaking it in rose-water.

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[1] Cf. General Prophetic Guidance In Preventive Medicine: His Rest

[2] Miswãk is a short wooden stick made of the *Salvadora Indiea* tree or from the Dittender wood (*Lepidium*) which extract has a bitter taste, and such extract can also be found nowadays in a variety of toothpastes, or even some that are manufactured in Western countries.

Ibn 'Abbãss, God be pleased with him, said that brushing one's teeth with a *miswãk* has ten benefits: (1) It freshens the mouth; (2) clears the brain; (3) generates a sense of well-being; (4) dissolves phlegm; (5) fights plaque; (6) readies the stomach for the next meal; (7) embraces the prophetic tradition; (8) pleases the Lord; (9) adds to one's merit; and (10) delights to the angels.

Other commentators contend that brushing one's teeth with a *miswãk* sharpens the memory, attunes the senses, strengthens the gums, dissolves phlegm, clears the vision, prevents cavities, helps digestion, clears the throat, benefits hoarseness or a husky voice, renders the speech more eloquent, dispels sleepiness, stimulates reading activity, helps one to attend to his prayers and to read the Qur'an, pleases God Almighty and the angels, and adds to one's merit.

It is good if one attends ceremoniously to brushing his teeth with *miswãk* before taking ablution for prayers, upon waking up for the dawn *fajr* prayer, and prior to each one of the five daily prayers.

Brushing with a *miswãk* is good whether one is fasting or not, although it is more needed when fasting because it maintains oral hygiene, and purifies the mouth. 'Ãmir bin Rabĩ'a, God be pleased with him, said: "I saw God's messenger ﷺ brushing his teeth with a *miswãk* while fasting. Imam al-Bukhãri narrated that 'Abdullãh bin Omar brushed his teeth with a *miswãk* morning and evening when fasting. Also it is beneficial to properly rinse one's mouth during fasting, and upon taking ablution. In this sense, when God Almighty spoke of appreciating the breath of a fasting person (*Arb. khalouf al-sã'im*), and treating it as if it were musk, He encouraged people to fast as a healthy expression of their devotion, and in no way was He encouraging neglect of oral hygiene, whereas, a fasting person is more in need of regularly brushing his teeth during the fast. In that sense, using the *miswãk* does in fact render the breath of a fasting person to smell like musk. This is similar to the smell of the blood of a believer who is wounded during a battle against the forces of darkness in this world, and which blood will smell like musk on the day of judgment, yet, he must clean his wound after the battle and before performing his next prayer.

However, the origin of bad breath (*stomatodysodia* or *halitosis*) during the fast is lack of food in the stomach which vapors bind to the teeth and the gums. Hence, it is better to brush them regularly and ceremoniously even when fasting.

God's messenger ﷺ and the believers used a *miswāk* whether fasting or not, and he encouraged the believers to use it. In fact, God's messenger ﷺ was never quoted to have asked them not to use it until after sunset — God knows best. (*Also see Aloeswood; Arāk; Flossing*)

Truffle (*Kam'a*)
Tuber; Ascomycetous fungi

Truffles refer to the hidden ascomycetous fungus that grow underground. Arabs call the plant the 'thunder plant', commonly known as the daughters of thunder (Arb. *banāt al-ra'ad*), because they abound in the fall, and especially during thunderous weather, where some truffles even move closer to the surface, and sometimes burst through the layers of the earth to the surface, and that makes them easier to harvest.

Truffles are edible pungent potato-shaped, spore-producing wild fungus that are highly prized as a delicacy, and their size ranges from 0.75 to 6 inches. The edible part of the truffle is the fruiting body which grows about one foot underground. Among the species and colors of truffles are: (1) the pungent odoriferous white truffle (also known as the false truffle), which has a white core, it grows in the fall, and is inferior in quality; (2) then comes the gray truffle, which has a broaden shape, and it grows in the autumn; (3) thirdly comes the winter truffle, which is of medium size and quality, and it grows in the winter; (4) the forth variety is the black truffle (*perigord truffle*), which ranges among the better quality of truffles, and it grow in the autumn as well; and (5) finally comes the red truffle, which is the best variety, it grows in the autumn as well, and is considered a delicacy.

It is narrated in the two collections of prophetic traditions that God's messenger ﷺ said: "Truffles are the manna of manna, and their water contains a cure for the eyes." (*Reported in sahīh Bukhāri and Muslim*).

Truffle or tuber literally means an underground swelling, (Arb. *Kama'a* > to hide). Truffles grow within the earth without planting, and they are short, thickened, and fleshy underground tuberous stems that resemble potatoes. Their element waxes from gaseous earthly substances that congest during the winter cold, and move closer to the surface of the earth, while the spring-rain helps their maturation. Truffles are also called tubers (I.E. *teubh-*, > base *tĕu-*, to swell > L *tumere*, to swell), and are sometimes called in Arabic *jadari-yul ard* (*i.e.,* smallpox of the earth), because

they occur in a similar way to the pustular eruptions that result from the smallpox virus.

The name *tuber* is derived from the similarity between the growing patterns of truffles and the smallpox in form and substance. Now, the smallpox is an infection of the blood cells that occurs usually during the early stage of children's growth when their innate heat and strength begin to develop and take hold of their body. Smallpox's main element is blood, and it is reproduced in lymphoid tissue also resulting in pustular eruptions. The condition causes symptoms of fever, malaise, headache, and chills that tend to be similar to those of common cold. Similarly, and under analogue natural conditions, tubers, or truffles, these ascomycetous fungus, or pustular eruptions of gaseous earthly substance, grow underground during the spring weather-warming season, and reach maturation in the fall and in the winter to become the food known as truffles, which is a prized delicacy for some people.

Truffles are one of the natural aliments and common food of nomad bedouins, and they abounds in the wilderness and the plains. Truffles are eaten raw or cooked. Tastewise, the best of their varieties are those that emerge in a partially sandy soil with limited underground water, and those that emerge in barren lands.

Similar to some varieties of fleshy fungi, such as the wild mushrooms, some species of the reddish truffles are poisonous and can cause asphyxia. Truffles are cold and moist in the third degree. They can cause harm to he stomach, and are slow to digest. Eating truffles regularly can cause colic, stroke (*apoplexy*), paralysis (*hemiplegia*), stomach pain, or retention of urine.

Eating fresh-moist truffles in season is better than eating the dried or the preserved ones. To prepare truffles for a meal, one must burry them overnight in moist mud, then wash them clean and polish them with the appropriate stone, or with a potato brush after soaking them for few hours in spring water treated with salt and thyme (Arb. *za'tar*). When eating them raw, or as a salad, truffles should be mixed with olive oil, and tossed heavily with hot spices to help in their digestion because of their earthlike and pyknotic nature.

Truffles produce adverse effects for the digestive system because of their poor nutritive quality and negative role in balancing natural waste. However, they contain a subtle aquatic substance indicating incisiveness, which renders them beneficial for daubing the eyes as kohl to treat night blindness, burning of the eyes, or conjunctivitis.

Physicians agree that a soup of truffles furbishes the vision, among various benefits mentioned by Avicenna and others.

As for the meaning of God's messenger's ﷺ saying: "Truffles are the manna of manna." The use of the prophetic word manna has two possible interpretations: (1) It could refer to the food God Almighty provided for the children of Israel in the wilderness, whereby the word *manna* in Arabic is not used here as a noun to indicate the common sweets known as *manna* (Arb. *mann*), but instead a transitive verb which means a favor (*manna*). In that sense, there is no doubt that the material and spiritual favors and assistance God Almighty bestowed upon the children of Israel were many, and truffles are one of such signs of the divine power to create and provide for the needs of His creation. He thus created and provided them to people without input, toiling or labor on their part, and without the need for ploughing or watering. As for God's favor upon the children of Israel in the form of food, He provided the truffles in this sense in the most perfect and nutritional state as their bread, quails represented the meat they asked for, and sap (Arb. *ṯall*; *turunjubeen*; *nasgh*) gave them their needed energy. The sap they ate was a readily available sweet they collected from desert trees, and it was a vital food for their life, health, and endurance. Hence, only with such divine blessings and favors, among many more, that they were able to satisfy their desire for meat, and to survive the crossing of the wilderness, by God's leave.

As for the common natural manna sweet (Arb. *turunjubeen*) which is another form of manna — this was the white, powdery, and fine as hoarfrost food that fell from the sky, and this was surely a miraculous deliverance from hunger, but this desert phenomenon can still be observed on a small scale in the Middle East, where certain insects secrete a sticky honeydew. The word manna in the Hebrew expression 'Aram mannã' means *hu*, or literally: 'What is it?'

Furthermore, (2) when God's messenger ﷺ used the expression manna for truffles, in the second sense, it meant a gift from the heavens, which no man has worked for, planted, ploughed, or watered.

In any case, since truffles are the 'manna of manna,' a blessed gift and a favor, then where did their serious harm come from?

To understand that, one must know that God Almighty has perfected everything He made, and that everything He originated is good and beneficial in its original form. Hence, whatever is

original and issues from God's command is free from defect or disease, and is created for a purpose intended as a manifestation of His infinite divine wisdom. Such creation carries unquestionable benefits when it exists and is implemented according to the divine command. It is only after its creation that anything can become subject to changes as a result of its attraction to opposite elements, mixing with them, or associating with them, besides other effectual reasons. Therefore, if everything is left to fulfill the original purpose of its creation, it would certainly be perfect, pure, and most beneficial.

In fact, any learned observer of the natural laws governing the elements of weather, plants, and animal life in this world will recognize the cause and process of putrefaction, and that such changes take effect only after the inception of a new creation. This includes environmental conditions, human, or animal input.

In this sense, and throughout the ages, the majority of inwardly and outwardly adversities and calamities humanity suffered are the result of their own actions, they are caused by their disobedience to God's commands. In fact, calamities are the consequence of people's failing to accept the divine message, or their refusal to follow the instructions of His messengers, upon all of whom be peace. Hence, disobedience, disbelief, and ingratitude (Arb. *kufr*), are certainly the cardinal cause of diseases, illnesses, plagues, droughts, hurricanes, and earthquakes, and because of people's rejection of the divine message, and warnings, GodAlmighty punishes them in this world first by commanding the soil, the fields, and the fruit trees to halt their full fruition, and He curtails their benefits, and restricts their harvest, including the original blessings He planted in their product — all of that happens by God's leave, and all of it happens in the form of a chain reaction.

Yet, if the reader's knowledge and foresight still cannot swallow or understand that, then let it be sufficient for you to read God Almighty's Holy Words in the last revelation: ❮ Corruption has appeared in the lands and the seas as a result of the evil actions people have earned themselves, so that God may make them experience some of what they have done, so that perhaps they may repent ❯ (*Interpretation of Qur'an 30:41*).

Therefore, one must apply the meaning of this verse to his world, and compare it with what he sees around you, and he will perhaps understand how illnesses and calamities originate, and how they are connected with people's actions, their deviation from God's path, and their indulgence in what He forbade. In fact, each time people sway and plunge from one indulgence into another,

and each time they lurk in their darkness, and bask in their lust and heedlessness, God Almighty causes deficiency in their basic aliments, fruits, waters, bodies, forms, births, humors, and characters. Such deficiencies justly reflect their mental condition, evil actions, injustices, insolence, and dissoluteness.

In fact, once upon a time, even the size of wheat grains was bigger than that which is known today, and God's blessings encompassed and increased their benefits then. Imam Ahmad narrated that he once found in one of the preserved grain silos of the Umayyad caliphate a bag of wheat, the size of each grain was as large as a date pit, and on each grain, he saw the inscription: "This is the product of the days when justice prevailed." *(Reported in Masnad Imam Ahmad).*

On the other hand, the majority of predominant diseases, ailments, disorders, illnesses, infirmities, maladies, among other syndromes known today, are the remainder of the divine punishment that were inflicted upon bygone rebellious and sinful nations, and they are present witnesses to their calamities. Whoever pursues their trail of ingratitude, sin, and indulgences will surely be struck with a portion of their fate in one way or another, or even invite new and unknown calamities. This will reflect a just verdict, and a divine and impartial jurisprudence.

God's messenger ﷺ pointed out that the bubonic plague is the remainder of a punishment God Almighty commanded to strike at an earlier nation. Similarly, Almighty Allah has created and subjected the destructive winds of hurricanes for seven days and nights as punishment for another nation whose evil actions, atheism, and rebellion are described in details in all the scriptures. In fact, what is left of such destructive forces are merely an obedient servant that stands to bear testimony to His divine supremacy and utmost true and continuous control of all things and beings. Such force, will be ready to strike, time after time, by His command, and as warranted. This is what is called an admonition, a divine warning, a lesson, and a must.

God Almighty also made scarcity of rain, drought, and dearth in this world the pristine punishment for hindering the distribution of alms-tax and charity. He placed unjust and merciless rulers in command to reflect people's own injustice towards one another, and towards the poor, the meek, and the needy, and to reflect the merchants' cheating of measures and in weights, and the aggression strong people carry against the weak ones.

In fact, the tyrant rulers who show no mercy or compassion when asked or even pleaded with, are nothing but an image reflection of the subjects' own evil actions, ignoble qualities, wicked nature, and oppression of one another. Hence, because of their evil qualities, people are sometimes afflicted with plagues, common diseases, or drought, or they are punished by subjecting them to the tyranny and oppression of unjust rulers, or by jeopardizing their efforts and exposing them to suffering insurmountable adversities, unknown diseases, excruciating pain, losses they witness with their own eyes, and countless psychological forms of depression, despair, heavyheartedness, or gloominess, among others. They can also be prevented from receiving the benefits of heavenly and earthly favors. Sometimes, such people are even left unprotected, and defenseless against violent assaults and constant attacks of evil spirits, demons, and jinn, who will abuse, torment, agonize, persecute, dement, and sometimes possess them. Such lessons will eventually teach them that God's justice surely prevails, and it will do so until His final command comes, or until they repent, so that everything must bind to its original purpose, and it must follow the path for which it was originally created.

Let a wise person travel the world to see for himself and bear witness to God's divine justice and infinite wisdom, perhaps he will understand the importance of accepting God's messengers and their righteous and true followers, and perhaps he will recognize people's dire need to accept the divine revelation, and to obey God's command. Therefore, whoever pursues the avenues of righteousness will meet with God's acceptance and receive His protection on the straight path, and whoever blindly follows the crowds and pursues the avenues of heedlessness will ultimately meet with destruction, and culminate in the most tormenting abode, the unending sorrow of hell-fire and eternal suffering therein.

Assuredly, God Almighty will fulfill His purpose. There is no ruling that supersedes His judgment, nothing can hinder His command, and He is surely the sole guardian of success.

(Additional interpretation of the prophetic guidance with regard to the benefits of truffles in curing the eyes:) As for the prophetic guidance in reference to the benefits of truffles' water for the treatment of infected eyes, there are two possible explanations: (1) That the water of Truffles must be mixed with other medicines as a stabilizer, or to increase their effectiveness, for apparently, such crude water on its own provides no immediate

benefits; and (2) the pure extract of truffles' water is distilled and then applied directly to the infected eyes, whereby, the natural body heat assists in its maturation, brings about its benefits, and further neutralizes its negative effects and harmful moisture. Other interpreters of the prophetic guidance provide that if the water is used exclusively to wash the eyes and to cool down the heat of infection, then it is a cure, otherwise, common sense requires that it must be mixed with other ingredients to effect healing. Furthermore, Imam al-Ghãfiqi explains that truffles' water is the best of cures to furbish the eyes and sharpen the vision if mixed with Egyptian antimony (Arb. *athmad*), and together they strengthen the eyelashes, and protects the eyes against common infections — God knows best.

Tuber (*Kam'a*)
(*See Truffle*)

– U –

Unfertilized Female Date (*Busur*)

It is reported in the collection of correct prophetic traditions that God's Messenger ﷺ, Abu Bakr, and Omar, God be pleased with them, once visited al-Haytham bin Tayhãn who placed before them a corymb of dates. God's Messenger ﷺ asked him: "Did you select fresh dates?" Al-Haytham replied: "I wished to place it before you to choose what you like from its *Busur*, and from its fresh ones."

Among the qualities of dates, *busur* is more hot than dry. Its benefits include drawing down excess body moisture, coating the stomach, causing a flow of the atrabiliary blood and the phlegm, effecting constipation when used in enemata and decoctions, as well as helping to cure uletic or gum diseases. (*Also see Dates*)

Uromastyx;[1] **Uromastix** (*Dhabb*)
Veranidae; Warran-lizard; Monitor; Lizard

Ibn 'Abbãss, God be pleased with him, narrated that God's messenger ﷺ was once offered a dish made with Uromastyx meat. When he refrained from eating it, someone asked him whether such meat is unlawful? He replied: "No, but it is not known to my household, so I find aversion[2] to it." Nevertheless, he ate

[1] Cf. *General Prophetic Guidelines In Preventive Medicine; His food and drink* .
[2] Aversion = *opsophobia.*

something else they served on the same table, and the people ate from the main dish they prepared. (*Reported in sahīh Bukhāri*)

It is also reported that Omar bin al-Khattāb, God be pleased with him, spoke about the Uromastyx meat, saying: "I do not consider it either lawful or unlawful." (*ibid.*)

Uromastyx[1] is primarily a desert dweller, and is common to the Arabian peninsula. Arabs of old hunted and ate its meat. Uromastyx is characterized by a small, non-overlapping, beadlike scales, a rounded head, a short neck, a short and squared tail, and has four short legs. Its color is sandy-pale yellow permeated with charcoal black.

Uromastyx feeds on locusts, grasshoppers, and plants. It lays its eggs in the sand, which provides the ideal incubator, and the eggs mature in approximately forty days.

Uromastyx meat is hot and dry, it increases sexual desire, stimulates semen, as well as it acts as an astringent.

– V –

Veal

(*See Broiled calf*)

Vinegar (*Khall*)

Imam Muslim reported in his sahīh that Jābir bin 'Abdullāh, God be pleased with him and with his father, narrated that God's Messenger ﷺ asked his family if they had any grubber (*idām*) to eat with some bread they placed before him for dinner. They replied: "We only have vinegar." God's Messenger ﷺ called for it and said: "Blessed is such seasoning." He then added: "Vinegar in a house protects it against poverty."

Vinegar is hot and cold, although mostly cold, and it is dry in the third degree, and it balances dry temperaments. Its drying characteristic prevents any possible overspelling of humors, and acts as a demulcent for the constitution. Wine vinegar is a cholestatic, and it helps abate inflammations of the stomach lining. Vinegar neutralizes the effects of medicines that are harmful to the body, helps dissolve the coagulation of milk, prevents blood clotting, benefits the spleen, arrests ambulant erysipelas, accelerates the healing of herpes and burns, prevents swelling, coats the stomach,

[1] Uromastyx is one of a family of lizards and it resembles the description of a Warran-lizard or a monitor of the genus Varanus in the family Varanidae, and it reaches approximately 1 foot 3 inches length.

dissolves phlegm, thins the blood, and helps the digestion. Drinking vinegar with salt counteracts accidental eating of poisonous mushroom, and drinking vinegar eliminates leeches in the throat. Gargling with hot vinegar helps toothache, relieves pain, and benefits the gums, and helps the healing of infected nails and nails bed, commonly known as 'whitlow' or 'panaris' (*L. paronychia*). Vinegar also abates hot swelling, helps in the treatment of burns and eczema. Drinking a syrup of vinegar helps people with a hot constitution. Finally, vinegar also increases the appetite, and is healthy for young people who dwell in a hot climate.

Vine-leek (*Thūm al-Sharq*)
Allium ampeloprassum
(*See Wild-leek*)

Vine plant (*Habla*)
(*See Grapevine*)

Violet Oil (*Duhn al-Banafsaj*)
Viola odorata
(*See Oil*)

– W –

Warran-lizard (*Dhabb*)
(*See Uromastyx*)

Wart-cress (*Thufā'; Rashād barri*)
(*See Aloe vera*)

Water (*Mā'*)

Water is the element of life, the master of drinks, and one of the main supporting pillars of the universe, and perhaps, water may be considered the bedrock of existence. The heavens were created of its vapors[1] and the earth is made of the solidification of its swelling foam, and Almighty Allah made water the source of life for everything.[2]

Water is cold and humid. It abates excess heat, preserves the body's natural level of humidity, helps the body replace otherwise

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[1] Modern scientists have learned from observation that the chemical composition of matters found in the atmosphere of the universe are 75% hydrogen, 24% helium, and 1% of other elements.
[2] (*Qur'an 21:30*)

absorbed or decomposed substances, thins dissolves food, and hence, allows its benefits into the veins.

The best quality of potable water must meet ten conditions: (1) Its must be colorless and transparent; (2) it must be free of odor; (3) its must be free of any foreign taste although sapid, such as the taste of the water of the Nile and that of the Euphrates; (4) it must be light and of delicate consistency; (5) it must flow as surface water that issues from good and uncontaminated grounds, all depending on the purity of the precipitation before it reaches the ground; (6) it must travel a good distance from its underground source before collecting it; (7) it must be flowing water, exposed to the sun and the air, and not hidden from the natural bleaching or decontamination process under the sun rays; (8) it must have a high flowing rate where it is collected for drinking; (9) it must be flowing rapidly and in large volume to help remove excesses and contaminated materials that collected or seeped into the streams; and finally, (10) water is best when it flows from the north to the south, or from the West to the East.

Considering the above characteristics, one finds that the majority of the above stipulations are (also) common to four major rivers: the Nile, the Euphrates, the Jaxartes,[1] and the Bactrus.[2]

Abu Huraira, God be pleased with him, narrated that God's messenger ﷺ said: "The Jaxartes, the Bactrus, the Nile, and the Euphrates are four of the rivers of paradise." (*Reported in saḫīḫ Muslim*)

There are three simple ways to determine the lightness of water: (1) By the speed of its heating and cooling; (2) by weight; or (3) by using a simple method of comparison, taking two cotton pieces of exact equal weight, and dip them in two different sources of water. The pieces are then taken out and left to dry before weighing them anew. The lighter piece of cotton indicates the lightness of the particular water.

If the water is cold and humid at the source, and as it moves, its potency changes and is affected by mere contact with the elements. For instance, water which is exposed to northern winds and which is hidden from other directions remains cold. Similarly, the temperament of water flowing in other directions is determined.

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[1] Jaxartes (Arb. *Saiḫoon*): Ancient name of the river Syr Darya, flowing west in central Asia from Uzbek into the Aral Sea.

[2] Bactrus > Bactria (*Jihon*; Arb. *Jaiḫoon*) = Bactra, the present-day Balkh, referring to the land housing the Oxus River, today called the Amu Darya River, that issues in the Pamir Mountains, and it flows west into the Aral Sea, in present-day northern Afghanistan and southern Tadzhik.

Water that originates from deep underground mineral springs also contains the same minerals, and it does effect the body accordingly.

Pure fresh water benefits both healthy and sick people. Cold fresh water is particularly healthier, more pleasing, and has a distinct aesthetic taste, although one must not drink cold water on an empty stomach, or after sexual intercourse, or immediately upon waking up from a sound sleep, or after taking a hot bath, or even after eating a fruit. However, one can drink cold water after a meal, or with the meal, if necessary, and he must sip it a little at a time, and not gulp it, or drink excessively. In this way, water does not cause any harm, instead, it strengthens the stomach, increases sexual desire, and assuages thirst.

Drinking lukewarm water can cause souffle, while drinking cold water does the opposite, yet, still water is better than a recently drawn water. Cold water benefits internally more that it does externally, while hot water does the opposite. Cold water benefits septicemia and the rising of vapor to the head, it eliminates putridity (*sepedon*), agrees with the humors, benefits the teeth, and counters the effects of hot climates and places.

On the other hand, cold water can harm any illness requiring maturation, such as head cold and inflammations associated with cold. Extremely cold water also can harm the teeth, while addiction to drinking cold water can cause rupture of blood vessels, bronchitis, bronchial catarrh, chest pain, among other cold illnesses.

Both extremely cold or hot water are harmful for the nerves, and to most limbs, because one of them dissolves, and the other contracts.

Drinking exceedingly hot water dissolves and reduces the accumulation of fat and other lipomatous compounds in the body. It also relieves heartburn, helps the maturation, dissolving, and the expelling of ejecta, dampens the stomach, heats it, ruins the digestion process, relaxes the stomach, and causes food to rise to the upper part of the stomach. Drinking hot water does not assuage the thirst, rather it wilts and dulls the body, abates sexual desire, causes deleterious illnesses, and aggravates most illnesses. On the other hand, drinking hot water benefits the aged, and helps sufferers of cold epilepsy, cold headache, and ophthalmia.

Finally, hot water is best used externally, and water heated in the sun is absolutely unhealthy.

Types of Potable Water Mentioned In the Prophetic Traditions and their Properties

(1) **Rainwater; Precipitation; Falling rain**: (*See Rainwater;* Arb. *Ghaith*).

(2) **Snow** (*Thalj*) **and Hail** (*Barad*): It is reported in the two collections of correct prophetic traditions (*sahïhain*) that God messenger ﷺ used to pray during the exordium (Arb. *Istiftãh*) and after entering the sanctity of prayers (*Arb. Salãt*), as well as at the conclusion of different prayers: "Lord, wash me of my sins with water, snow, and hail."

Snow has biting cold and vaporous hot properties, and its water imbibes the same attributes. We explained earlier some of the benefits and wisdom in asking God Almighty to wash one's sins and harm that generates from one's errors with the water of melted snow. This prayer particularly denotes the heart's needs of coolness, tonicity, and induration. From this wisdom, we also learn about the basic rules of medical treatment, and the need to treat an illness with its antidote.

On the other hand, drinking water that is collected from melting hail is more soothing and has a more sapid taste than that of snow; and finally, the water of melted ice depends on its source and particular properties.

Snow also acquires the inherent attributes of mountains and lands on which it falls.

As we have explained earlier, one must avoid drinking ice cold water, or the water of melted snow after taking a bath, after sexual intercourse, after extraneous physical exercises, or after eating hot food. In fact, drinking ice cold water can aggravate coughing condition, chest pain, weak kidney, and does not agree with people of cold temperament. (*Also see Snow*)

(3) **Water of Wells and Underground Brooks**: Firstly, their water is heavy, because it congests and allows some degree of septicity; and secondly, it lacks exposure to air. Such water must be left exposed to open air for overnight before drinking it. The most harmful of such water is that which is channeled through lead pipes, or the stagnant water drawn from an unused well.

(4) **Zamzam Water**: This is the master of all waters, the most blessed, the most praised, the most beloved, and the most

precious. Zamzam water is regarded by all Muslims as the most valuable drink. Zamzam is the long hidden underground blessed water, the archangel Gabriel exposed near the bushes, at the foot of the Ka'aba in Mecca today, and it is the drink of the infant Ishmael and his mother Hagar, as it has been the drink of millions of pilgrims from all over the world for thousands of years.

It is reported in the *sahĩh Muslim* that Abu Tharr al-Ghafãrï, God be pleased with him, had spent forty days and nights in retreat at the Ka'aba with nothing to eat or drink except Zamzam water, and when he returned to Medina, God's messenger ﷺ remarked: "Surely Zamzam is a highly pleasing food, and a cure for diseases."

Jãbir bin 'Abdullãh, God be pleased with him, narrated that God's messenger ﷺ said: "Zamzam is the answer to whatever intention one makes upon seeking to drink from it." (*Reported in Sunan Ibn Mãja*).

(5) **Water of The Nile**: The Nile River is one of the rivers of paradise. It is also a major water source and is the longest river in the world. Heavy rainfalls and floods are major contributors to the river and its tributaries. God Almighty permits such waters to replenish the floodplains, and to carry fertile alluvial soil which supports a wide variety of vegetations, including: (1) tropical forests along with stretches of lightly wooded savanna; (2) high grasses, papyrus, water lettuce, and water hyacinth to the north in the plains adjacent to the Sudd; (3) acacia and scrub in the drier zone of the Sahel area, and finally; (4) a true desert plants that prevails farther north except in the heavily irrigated Nile valley.

The heavy rainfall takes place north in the most distant headwaters. The course of the Nile and its tributaries include other rivers and streams that ultimately join, and continue as the Nile River until they reach the Nile Delta in the north, which is formed by thousands of years of silt deposits. This is where the river branches again into many streams that flow to irrigate vast lands that are cultivated up to the Mediterranean Sea.

Except for the direction of its flowing course, the quality of the Nile water includes all of the other nine important characteristics mentioned hereinabove, including: lightness, consistency, taste, and purity.

(6) **Seawater**: It is reported in the correct prophetic traditions that God's messenger ﷺ said: "Seawater is clean for taking ablution, and flesh of sea creatures is lawful as food."

God Almighty made seawater salty, briny, brackish, and extremely bitter for the benefit of human and animal creatures of the dry land.

In fact, the sea is invariably stagnant. It embodies countless sea creatures, and dead sea creatures are not buried. Consequently, if seawater was unsalted or sweet, and upon the death and decay of sea creatures, the water would turn toxic and septic as a result of putrefaction, and its evaporation would pollute and putrefy the air in the entire world. For this reason, and in His infinite wisdom, God Almighty decreed that it be salty, briny, and brackish, and for salt to act as a preservative (*cf. Salt*). Hence, decay does not effect or change the quality of seawater, even if a dead creature remains therein from the beginning of the world and until the end of it. As for the cause of its salinity, this is attributed to the morassic nature of the seabed soil, being a depository of organic sediments, and some of which eventually becomes valuable minerals. Furthermore, seawater is the most common source of major evaporite accumulations and marine minerals.

In any case, bathing in seawater benefits in the treatment of several surface skin diseases. However, drinking it is utterly unhealthy, and it causes diarrhea, wasting, skin allergies, itching, and souffle, as well as it produces extreme thirst. The only way to drink seawater, and under dire need, is to distill it first, and the same is required if one is compelled to drink the stagnant water of a marsh or a morass. In this case, among several methods of distilling water, and if one happen to be in the wilderness, or near a seashore, he can use an ancient method, by placing such water in a pot, lay some sea sand-reeds on top of it, and cover it with a few clean or new pieces of cotton when possible. Place the pot on fire until the water boils and evaporates, and when the cotton has absorbed the water, compress the cotton, and drink the water.

In the case of lacking fresh water, and if one is compelled to drink stagnant water, he must first place it in a pot, throw few stones or pits of apricot inside it, and wait a while before drinking it. Otherwise, one can place a couple of pieces of wood of an Indian oak-tree, or of a teak-tree,

or he can place a piece of a burning coal to extinguish inside the pot, or add some colloidal clay, or even some wheat stalks when available, and this ancient method helps the sediments to precipitate to the bottom of the pot.

Wild chickory (*Hindiba*)
Chichorium intybus
(*See Endive*)

Wild-leek (*Kurrãth nabṯi; Basal al-'afreet; Thüm al-Sharq*)
Allium ampeloprassum
Blue-leek

An apocryphal tradition relates that God's messenger ﷺ said: "Whoever eats wild-leek before retiring to bed will be free from flatulency (thick hemorrhoidal gases), although the angels will keep a distance from him because of the malodorous stench it produces until the morning" (*Reported in al-Wasila*).

There are two kinds of leek, the wild-leek (Arb. *Kurrãth nabṯi*), and the common leek (L. *Allium porrum*; Arb. *Kurrãṯẖ ma'arouf*, also known as *Kurrãṯẖ Rümi*; or *Kurrãth Shãmï*).[1]

Originating in central Asia, the wild-leek (*Allium ampeloprassum*) family Amaryllidaceae, also known as blue-leek, is cultivated for its bulbs which are surrounded by a thin purplish sheath, containing up to twenty cloves each.

Wild-leek is hot and dry. It is slow to digest, and has effects similar to those of raw garlic, when eaten as a condiment. Eating wild-leek cooked, or drinking its water helps cure cold sores and hemorrhoids (*piles*). Making a powder of the wild-leek seeds, mixing the said powder with pitch, or wood tar (a resin found in certain evergreen trees), and fumigating a carious tooth with it will ease its removal, or even break it into fragments. This procedure must be administered by an experienced *ẖakïm*, and it abates casual toothache, while exposing hemorrhoidal infections to such smoke will abate hemorrhoidal pain, and help their cure. Eating raw wild-leek is harmful to one's teeth and gums, and similar to garlic, it causes headache, nightmares, dims the vision, and promotes bad breath. Wild-leek is also used as a diuretic, and it helps the menstrual period (*emmenagogue*), stimulates the production of semen, and increases sexual desire. (*Cf. Garlic*)

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[1] *Rümi = Shãmï*, i.e., Syria, northern of Arabian Hijãz. Both words Rümi and Shãmï mean present-day Syria, since it was part of the Roman Empire once.

The vegetable leek (*Allium ampeloprasum*) of the Porrum group, is a mild-flavored relative of the onion. The plant produces a sheath of linear leaves about 1.6 inch thick but. Unlike onions, the plant does not form a distinctive bulb. Plants are blanched by gradually building up the soil around their bases, a process that keeps the edible portion white and tender. The culture of leek is similar to that of onions. Leek seeds are sown directly in the soil, or seedlings may be transplanted.

Wild Marjoram (*Mardaqüsh*)
Origanum Majorana
(*See Sweet Majoram*)

Winter truffle (*Banăt al-ra'ad; Kam'a shatwi*)
Tuber; Ascomycetous fungi
(*See Truffle*)

White petty spurge (*Shurunb*)
(*See Euphorbia; Shubrom*)

White truffle (*Kam'a abyadh*)
Tuber; Ascomycetous fungi
(*See Truffle*)

Wild Ass (*Himãr Wahshi*)
(*See Meat*)

Woad (*Wasma; wasmatu sabbăgheen; ward al-Neel*)
Dyer's weed; Ash of Jerusalem; (D) ***Wilder Indigo***
Isatis tinctoria

Woads' leaves are elongated, their color leans to dark-purple, and they resemble the leaves of the asparagus beans (Arb. *Loubia*, or the black eyed dolichos. (*Also see Indigo leaf*)

- Y -

Young Gazelle (*Gazăla*)
(*See Meat*)

- Z -

Zizyphus (*'Inab*)
(*See Grapes*)

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